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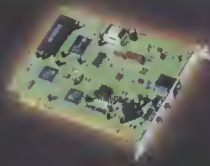
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FROM THE editor

OUR COVER STORY THIS month focuses on one of the negative aspects of the Net — fraud. It's easy to fall prey to the sharks circling the Web ocean out there, so we've put together a guide of what to be wary of, and how to stay safe. Please heed our message.

And there's plenty of happy messages and ideas in our 101 safe and great sites for kids. Education, creativity, animals, and just about everything else you could imagine to occupy growing minds online.

True bargain hunters have already discovered the Web as a rich resource for their discount shopping adventures, but we bet there's something in our feature on p 50 that even the most hardened miser amongst you hasn't found yet.

For news junkies — and isn't the Net a goldmine for them — we've some interesting and controversial resources they'll have to visit. At least once.

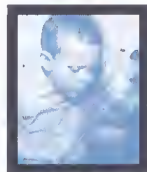
And with sites to manage your time, enjoy your coffee, grow your business, dream of travel, find more music, download more software, find a new friend, and expand your bookmarks beyond your capacity to store them, we wonder how you'll get through it all before September's on us. Enjoy!

Darren H

Darren Horrigan

EDITOR

darrenh@netguide.aust.com



CONGRATULATION The winner of the MP3 player in the Chaos Music competition is **Silvia Vogel** of East Doncaster, Victoria. And **Lisa Atkinson, Robert Dickson, Joanne Nichols, Kama Bailey, & Hugh Barker** won NetGuide t-shirts in our recent Net Nerd competition.

letter of the month



C'mon, what's keeping all you seniors?

Dear *NetGuide*,

As an older person 61 years young, who has just gone into the IT world, I would like to say to all people of my age or older who are scared of computers: "get out there and have a go!" I did the first part of a TAFE course last year with no

idea where to start and managed to get a pass in all three parts of "desktop publishing". If I can do it, anyone can. This year, I'm doing a full IT course. / **KEITH GREENWOOD, PORT MACQUARIE, NSW**

You get what you (don't) pay for

Dear *NetGuide*,

My most frustrating online experiences come from having a free ISP like Globalfreeway, which continues to "cut out" after only a few minutes. Globalfreeway have advised subscribers that regular maintenance may be a cause for this interruption, but imagine my disappointment when I continually receive advice from my browser that it cannot find the Globalfreeway server. It was interesting to read in your July edition that Globalfreeway has entered into a \$1 Million sponsorship of the Australian

Youth Orchestra. Wouldn't it serve the company's subscribers better if the \$1 million was allocated to improving their service first? / **BRIAN MCCANN, PORT PIRIE, SA**

MP3 is here to stay

Dear *NetGuide*,

I've just read the MP3 debate article (July) and I can't help but think the Australian music industry will be ignoring MP3s at their own peril. While Mr Fabinyi's assertion that "MP3s are barely in the same suburb (as CD's)" is technically correct, he fails to acknowledge the extraneous noise environments in

which music is mostly listened to: moving cars, bars, nightclubs, your own loungeroom — hardly the ideal settings to listen to perfect high fidelity music. You would think the proliferation of MP3 download sites would give Mr Fabinyi an inkling of what was going on. / **KEN HARDIE, SOUTH MELBOURNE**

\$1 an hour to surf

Dear *NetGuide*,

After reading the letters about getting paid to surf, I thought I should tell your readers there's an Australian paid to surf company called PocketScreen www.pocketscreen.cjb.net which pays \$1 an hour. That's double what Alladvantage pay. Keep up the good work. / **STEVE EMERY, SYDNEY**

Sleeping through chaos

I refer to the article by Darren Horrigan (.com and .net are .boring) where he made the comment about learning that the Vomiting Infants Syndrome Association of America nearly stole visa.com. He then said: "imagine the chaos the Newcastle International Kiteflyers Ensemble could have caused." Well, I guess he didn't actually check nike.com.au did he? It's registered to a company called "New Internet Kinetic Energy."

The **LETTER OF THE MONTH** winner receives a free copy of **Norton Internet Security 2000** valued at \$99

SYMANTEC.

Now, about that chaos... I must have slept through it.

/ROGER CHAPPELL, DEVONPORT TAS

Zzzzzzzz...../Ed

The difference between hackers and crackers...

Dear *NetGuide*,

Your section in the June edition on hackers is a load of crap. Real hackers use their knowledge. I hack the real way. I'm not here to tell you how to hack. The fact that you call all hackers criminals is outrageous. Hacking is done for curiosity. How can curiosity be a crime? I feel you should get your facts straight before you accuse all the "real" hackers on the Net. Most of us aren't hate filled hooligans out to cause malicious mischief on others.

/ TIM GOODWIN, SHOALHAVEN

HEADS, NSW

We know, which is why we went to great lengths in our July edition to explain the difference between crackers (the bad guys) and hackers (the good guys). And nowhere in the article you cite does *NetGuide* "call all hackers criminals." / Ed

...and who is really to blame

Dear *NetGuide*,

Some of the information in your June story about hacking isn't correct.

One part said:

"The ISP in this case thought it's security was tight, and are still investigating Denise's situation." Denise's ISP account being stolen should have nothing to do with the ISP's security. The only way the ISP could stop the account being stolen is to put a block on certain ports that Trojan Horse viruses are known to use. But the ISP would not be able to block the millions of ports a hacker could use without affecting other customers. Trojan Horses are not the fault of an ISP. It's actually the user's fault for not using virus scanners.

/ DANIEL MOORE, BRISBANE

No, it's actually the idiot cracker's fault for writing the virus in the first place. / Ed

your sites & tips

Dog lovers www.adogslife.com.au
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Affirmations www.affirmware.com.au
Star Wars rebelpilot.sweetnet.com

Welcome Auntie Lulu

Dear *NetGuide*,

Auntie Lulu, thank you, thank you, thank you! Thank you for your contribution to the latest issue of *NetGuide*. As a devoted subscriber, I was delighted to read your comments on websites which comprise the "odd" side to the Web. Your humour and character was my guiding light on an otherwise dreary day. I consider you to be a valuable addition to an already outstanding publication. Bravo!

/ MARC WILLIAMS,

BRISBANE

That's lovely. Flattery will get you everywhere Marc.

/ Auntie Lulu

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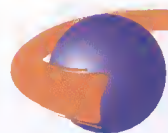
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How to turn \$10,000 into \$10,100: sell it!



A recent publicity stunt by Australian auction site, BidOrBuy www.bidorbuy.com.au, where it auctioned a \$10,000 wad of cash, had an unexpected result — the winning bid was \$10,100. While it's beyond BidOrBuy why anyone would fork out \$100 more for what something is patently worth, a spokesman for the site said: "There are so many weird and wonderful people out there. They just get a kick out of winning." The auction, which started at 6am, was run and won by 3pm the same day.

One man's joke is another man's juice

When *Esquire* magazine www.esquire.com printed an April Fool's article about a fictitious start-up called FreeWheelz, a company that gave away free cars and made money by covering the vehicles with advertising, a group of entrepreneurs who'd been planning just such a business called the magazine with a request. They wanted to buy the URL *Esquire* had registered to ward off possible problems down the line. The address www.freecar.com had cost *Esquire* US\$70 but the real company, Freecar.com paid the magazine US\$25,000 for the rights.



Chinese teens hooked on "electronic heroin"

Chinese officials have launched another attack on cybercafes after a regulation banned them from operating within 200 metres of schools. Police in Xiamen have shut down 45 Internet cafes in the city. After Chinese teens were flocking to surf the Net, chat, read online papers and get stock information, some parents and teachers called the cybercafes "electronic heroin." In February, Shanghai officials raided and shut down 127 unlicensed cybercafes, claiming they "corrupt the minds of young people" and posed a threat to state secrets.



France versus Yahoo — Round Three

Yahoo! www.yahoo.com co-founder, Jerry Yang, has rejected an order by a French court to stop web surfers in France gaining access to sales of Nazi memorabilia on one of the Web sites hosted by the world's best-

known search engine. "We are not going to change the content of our sites in the United States just because someone in France is asking us to do so," said a defiant Yang. A Yahoo! auction site puts hundreds of Nazi, neo-Nazi, and Ku Klux Klan objects up for auction each day, including films, swastikas, uniforms, daggers, photos and medals.

E-law package to help cut costs

A collective of Australian solicitors and barristers have launched a new e-law package that they claim is one of the first in the world. Lawform

www.lawform.com.au is designed to expedite the way barristers and lawyers do business. It's hoped this will result in financial savings which will in turn be passed on to consumers using legal services.



Charity begins on the Web

A host of Australian charities will benefit from the proceeds raised by a new online shopping mall, Free2give.com.au www.free2give.com.au. Charities including the Cancer Council, the MS Society and the Starlight Children's Foundation will receive a percentage of the profit from every item bought from the 40 "shops" in the mall.



One planet, two Aussies, three years

Like a chapter from Boys Own Adventure, two Australians are planning a three-year vehicle journey around the world which will be recorded via their Web site at

www.rovingtheglobe.com.

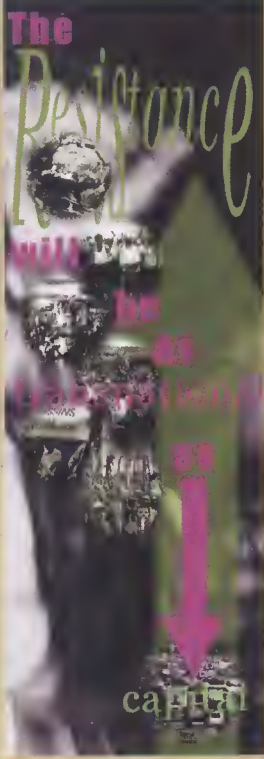
Brant Campbell, 29, and his brother Aaron, 31, plan to leave Sydney on their trip early next year. They are currently planning the trip and testing equipment. One of the tour vehicles has a permanently mounted satellite system which provides voice and data communications to be used to update the Web site. The younger Campbell walked away from a high-flying job as a software architect with Microsoft to undertake the trip, which he says will probably cost \$1.5 million by its end.

Australia joins Net development world body



The World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) www.w3c.com will open an Australian office in Brisbane to provide local organisations with direct input into the future direction of the Web. The international consortium, which was created in 1994 to promote and develop the Web, is jointly run by the

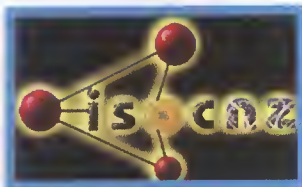
Massachusetts Institute of Technology Laboratory for Computer Science (MIT LCS) www.lcs.mit.edu in the US, the National Institute for Research in Computer Science and Control (INRIA) www.inria.com.fr in France, and Keio University www.keio.ac.jp in Japan. There are now 11 offices around the world with six in Europe and others in Israel, Morocco, Taiwan, and Hong Kong.



Just done: nike.com hijacked by Australian protestors

"Global justice is coming — prepare now" was the message waiting for visitors to the Web site of one of the world's biggest sporting goods companies recently. A spokesman from Nike www.nike.com said people were re-directed to the website of an Australian activist organization called S-11 www.s11.org, which is urging supporters to protest the World Economic Forum in Melbourne in September.

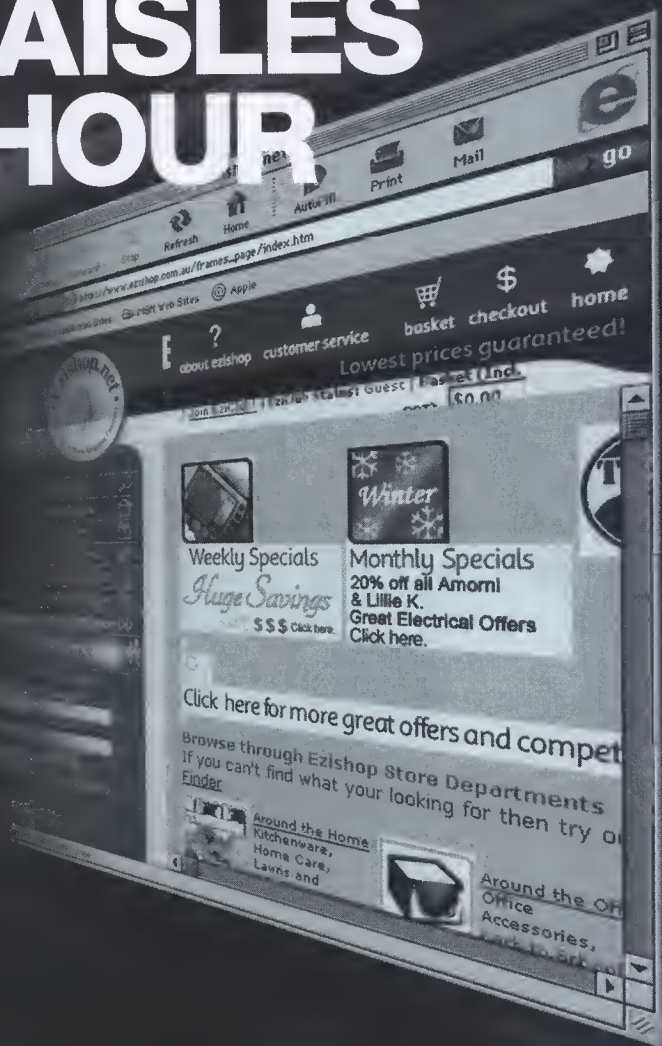
common English usage. The ISOCNZ said it does not see itself as an appropriate body to set or impose standards of public decency. A man who registered two of the seven names said: "I'm pretty pleased with the 'f' and 's,' words," He said he had already listed one name on a domain name auction site, and that he would keep the other for now until the obscene word "may be more acceptable." And hence, much more valuable.



Kiwis decide that !@#\$%&.com is OK

The Internet Society of New Zealand (ISOCNZ) www.isocnz.org.nz has lifted its ban preventing registration of seven "offensive" words as domain names after it received little or no public opposition to the idea. The seven words are basically biological terms in

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Smell may soon follow sight and sound over the Net

An Israeli start-up called Selselt Technologies has developed a technique that would enable scents to be transmitted over the Internet. This would allow computers, game consoles, TVs and mobile telephones to emit a wide range of smells detectable from a range of one metre. Industry pundits claim the discovery has a huge market, especially for computer games. Selselt believes its invention will also revolutionize the fragrance, aromatherapy, telemedicine and food processing industries. Technicians who work in big coffee and food companies will be able to fax odours to their

colleagues. Similar to the RGB (Red, Green and Blue) technology, where basic colours are mixed to produce millions of other colours, the scent technique involves the mixing of basic smells by numerical codes which are faxed to its intended recipient where decoding produces the aroma from a cartridge of basic smells.

Watch your car being born



American car giant,
General Motors
www.gm.com plans to put
Web-accessible cameras in

factories so buyers can use the Internet to watch their vehicles being assembled. It's a novel approach aimed at keeping customers excited about a car they ordered. And it's also part of GM's plan to cut vehicle delivery time to about 10 days from the current 60 to 70 days.



The Good Book now downloadable

When civic-minded Netizen, David Williams, couldn't find an audio version of the Bible on the Internet that he could download, he decided to record one himself in MP3. Using his desktop PC and a software-editing program, Williams began recording himself reading the Good Book. With all the New Testament now available at **www.audiotreasure.com** and work begun on the Old Testament, Williams is in the process of completing the world's first free and downloadable Bible.

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Is your computer making you lazy?

While the World Wide Web may allow our minds to surf to the far corners of the globe, our bodies rarely make it beyond our own front door, according to a survey by recruitment company, Morgan & Banks www.morganbanks.com.au. The survey reports that 53.1% of employed people and 68.4% of unemployed people are more inactive now than they were five years ago. Of these people, 41% place the blame squarely on their personal computer. Director, John Banks, says the findings indicate the need for people not to get too wrapped up in the online world. "While advances in technology are shaping the way for a fast moving and global workplace, the human impact is not necessarily positive. People need to have balance in their lives," he says.



Viral mobility

The recent virus attack on mobile phones in Spain has lead one of the world's leading PC security firms, Symantec



www.symantec.com, to develop technology for all handheld devices — from Palm personal digital assistants to mobile phones. Although no viruses have attacked Palm devices yet, Symantec says it's only a matter of time. "As you watch the Internet grow and move toward wireless devices, you will also see the bad guys move toward these devices," said Vincent Weafer, director of the Symantec Antivirus Research Center www.symantec.com/avcenter/venc/data/prettytark.worm.html

Red light areas online

An American politician says new top level domain names like ".sex" and ".xxx" should be used to establish virtual red light districts on the Net as a way of shielding children from sexually explicit material. Rather than constricting the Net's open architecture, it would capitalize on it to effectively protect children from pornography without encroaching on the rights of adults to have access to free expression.

How to wire a big population

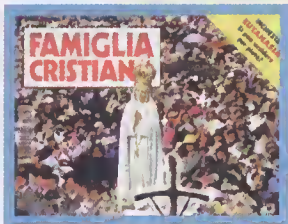
A team of engineers in India say they've found an innovative way of bringing the Net cheaply and quickly to India's massive rural population — use its extensive railway network as a conduit for communications cables. The team is adding cybercafe kiosks to stations along the track for use by local people without their own computer equipment. The idea could potentially link 4,000 towns and 100,000 households to the Net within the next two years.



- ★ **Wordplay unfair** Popular search engine, Yahoo! www.yahoo.com is suing Yooahoo, www.yooahoo.com, a Thai portal site, claiming it could mislead Internet users. Yahoo says it doesn't want compensation, but it does want Yooahoo shut down.



- ★ **Now THAT's viral marketing** US hardware retailer, Shoppingplanet.com www.shoppingplanet.com, inadvertently virus-spammed 50,000 of its subscribers with a promotional newsletter which contained the recent CV virus.
- ★ **Follow the torch** The only site on the Internet that provides daily news of the Olympic Torch Relay's progress through Australia's towns and cities is now available at www.amp.com.au/torchrelay.



- ★ **Helpful hacking** Mexico's leading opposition party hired hackers to reveal a secret list of beneficiaries of a massive US\$100 billion bank rescue package in 1995 which allegedly favoured some corrupt businessmen.



- ★ **Viruses multiply** A new survey by software multi-national, Computer Associates www.ca.com, says the number of viruses infecting Australian businesses has risen by 75 per cent, with most infections causing damage.



- ★ **e-sinning** In an advice column, Italian Catholic magazine *Famiglia Cristiana* www.stpauls.it/fc declared that internet adultery is just as sinful as the real thing.
- ★ **Web oneupmanship** When a big US law firm registered the domain name www.verizonsucks.com to stop pranksters poking fun at their big telco client, there was only one move the pranksters could make — register www.verizonreallysucks.com instead. So they did.
- ★ **Hey! That's Julia's dotcom** Movie star, Julia Roberts, won the right to her own name in cyberspace when an arbitration panel ruled that a cybersquatter who registered www.juliaroberts.com had no legitimate interest in the domain name and had used it in bad faith.
- ★ **War on squatters** The Australian Government www.fed.gov.au has called on the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) www.wipo.com to develop guidelines and policies to prevent cybersquatting.



Complaints about ISPs on the rise

The most recent figures from the Australian Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman www.tio.com.au shows

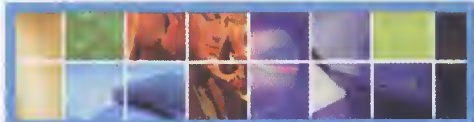
that complaints about Internet access have increased from 23.4% to 28% of all Internet-related complaints. The rise is due to an increase in complaints about Internet dropouts, which occurs when the connection between the customer's modem and their Internet service provider is broken. Complaints about staff of ISPs increased from 3.7% to 7.2% of all Internet related complaints.



Pacific Internet revs up regions

Internet Service Provider, Pacific Internet, www.pacific.net.au has established seven more points of presence (POPs)

throughout regional Australia at Penrith, Gosford, Wollongong, Sunshine Coast, Gold Coast, Morning Peninsula, Geelong, and Canberra. A recent Australian Bureau of Statistics www.abs.gov.au report estimated that only 15 percent of regional homes have access to the Net.



New broadband service for Canberra residents

The commercial rollout of a fibre-rich optic cable designed to enhance communications-based applications in Canberra over the next two years was launched recently. The project, which has been undertaken by TransACT Communications www.transactcomms.com.au, will use a digital broadband system to provide telephone, video and high-speed data services to residents. Chief executive, John Mackay, said: "We are modelling Canberra as a city of the future, a smart city." ■



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- Canberra
- Coffs Harbour
- Glen Innes
- Gold Coast
- Inverell
- Kempsey
- Melbourne
- Newcastle
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- Tamworth

www.impulseairlines.com.au

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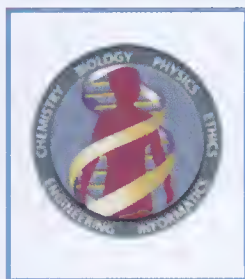
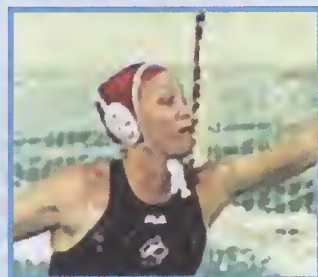
- 1 6 email addresses (enough for everyone to have their own address).
- 2 10 MB of web space (plenty of room for you to make yourself the next web celebrity).
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- 4 Flat Rate internet (exactly what it sounds like. No need for explanation).
- 5 Free 24 hr, 7 day a week helpdesk to sort out any questions you might have.
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ihug into the internet™

Keeping score at the 2000 Olympics

With the world's biggest (sporting) event only weeks away, there'll be no shortage of Web sites available to inform, entertain, and excite sports fans. *NetGuide* recommends the Official Site of the Sydney Olympics www.olympics.com from SOCOG and IBM; Sydney Games www.smh.com.au/olympics by *The Sydney Morning Herald*; NBCOlympics www.nbcolympics.com from American TV network NBC; CNN's www.cnn.com/olympics from CNN and Sports Illustrated; and Fox Sports at www.foxsports.com/olympics



Unravelling the secrets of life

"This is the outstanding achievement not only of our lifetime but in terms of human history."

British geneticist, Dr Michael Dexter, used these heady words to

announce the completion of the first draft of a genetic recipe for a human being by the Human Genome Project www.oml.gov/hgmis. The working draft of the human genome map will provide scientists with the biological foundation of human life. Researchers say the complete map may herald a revolution in medicine, giving physicians the material they need to predict, prevent, and even treat disease.

Adding it up with the GST

Experts are now eagerly awaiting the short-term reactions to the Goods and Services Tax (GST). In the nervous confusion leading up to



its implementation, many businesses turned to Web sites like the Business Entry Point www.business.gov.au and GSTme www.gstme.com.au. The Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia (ICAA) www.icaa.org.au publishes a weekly tax bulletin on its site which issues updates on the effects of the tax.

Footy finals kick off

The Australian Football League (AFL)

www.afl.com.au and National

Rugby League (NRL) www.nrl.com.au finals are usually held in September, but they're earlier this year due to the Olympics. The finals culminate at Sydney's Stadium Australia www.stadiumaustralia.com.au for the NRL, and the Melbourne Cricket Ground www.mcg.org.au for the AFL. Tickets for the games can be ordered online. *NetGuide* tips the Sydney Roosters www.sydneyroosters.com.au for the NRL trophy, and the Essendon Bombers www.essendonfc.com.au for the AFL flag. ■



FEATURE P58: All the News that's fit to scroll

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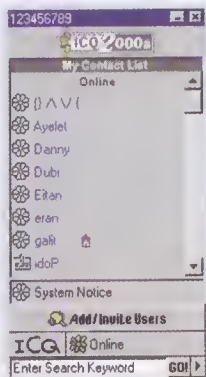
When new doesn't mean better

ICQ 2000a Beta release



Price Free
Site www.icq.com
Platform Windows, Linux, Mac

This version of the world's most popular instant messaging program — with more than 100 million downloads, 15 million active users and about a million newcomers each week — is a disaster. But do continue



reading on the basis we're passing our own humble judgement on an *instant messaging program*...
ICQ, created by four socially aware Israelis, used to be a simple, speedy, lean, and efficient way for people to keep in touch online. It's now become the digital world's version of a Swiss Army knife: crammed with schedules, post-it notes, email clients, auto-reminders, message paging, personal Web pages, and all behind a firewall! *NetGuide's* covert agents in the Mossad report that the next version comes with broadband access, holograms, and time-travel.

What we're left with here in this unofficial release is software that devours memory space to accommodate many truly useless features. And before supplying these new

"features", one must ask why didn't anyone at I SEEK YOU seek to fix the bugs in the old features?

There are many navigational glitches and configuration hassles; more buttons than a Michael Jackson coat yet no decent keyboard shortcuts in the main window; an

announcements pane that's particularly unnecessary and therefore galling; and typewriter sounds in messages that are cute for 30 seconds but soon drive you to drink. The program takes more than six megs of ram where the original ICQ took less than two; it demands an 8 or 10 digit ID number which you're likely to forget; and it will probably crash your machine.

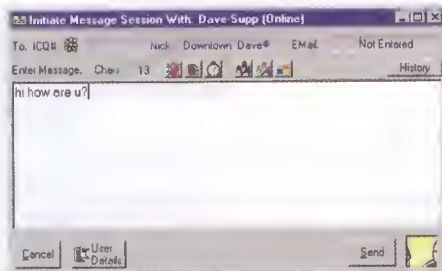
Many of my ICQ chat buddies have crashed and crashed again. They 'aint happy, and some are even considering downgrades to earlier versions, or other programs like MSN's Instant Messenger or Odigo.

ICQ2000a is indeed a memory muncher that brings new meaning to the term "bloatware". If it was a person it would be overweight, arrogant, and loaded with ideas nobody wants. It would be Marlon Brando.

I'd recommend this program only to extremely

computer savvy people with muscular hardware, lots of spare time and the patience of Job. My advice: stick with your ICQ 98a-99b version. They're the ones that charmed the world.

/ DARREN HARRIGAN





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Net users he way the Net fe when it moved tly black and raphic-rich orld Wide Web. ations that will colour handheld re pipeline. The are promising. e has embraced nology. In the planned that all s will be wireless ile phone as a l being able to dial bers directly from address book. One met with a Palm readlines from he had just l. Exciting times

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When new doesn't mean better

ICQ 2000a Be

Price Fr
Site W
Platform W

This version of the v messaging program downloads, 15 millic newcomers each w



knife: crammed wi clients, auto-remir Web pages, and all covert agents in th version comes witl and time-travel.

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Colour has come to the popular handheld Palm organiser — and made all the difference. After years of peering at notes, address books and data at a small monochrome screen, you'll wonder how you did without the vivid well-lit screen the new device offers. Even in sunlight, when colour tends to vanish, the screen remains clearly readable.

Colour and cost aside, is this really the time to buy a handheld? Being able to jot down things or even retrieve your email while on the move sounds practical, but you want some downtime from a computing device, don't you? It's surprising how quickly you find your life changes, for the better, with this Palm. The secret is the company's "keep it simple" philosophy which means instructions are easy and logical.

The slick-looking unit, weighing 192 grams, is compact enough to carry around but slightly longer than previous models. The Lithium battery is supposed to last up to a fortnight, but remember, using bright colour can drain the battery more quickly. However, it recharges in minutes.

There are no dramatic software changes, but some nice, subtle additions to basic tasks. You can hide details of meetings you don't want the world to know

about, a date book shows your agenda for the whole day including your "to do" list, and a snooze button comes in handy on trips away.

An application lets you do slide shows on the Palm during meetings and there's also games for playing in a bored moment.



Long-time Net users remember the way the Net jumped to life when it moved from text-only black and white to a graphic-rich colourful World Wide Web. Many applications that will show off a colour handheld are still in the pipeline. The early signs are promising.

The device has embraced mobile technology. In the future, it's planned that all Palm devices will be wireless using a mobile phone as a modem and being able to dial phone numbers directly from your Palm address book. One Australian I met with a Palm

111c recently was busy checking headlines from *The Sydney Morning Herald* that he had just downloaded, as well as his email. Exciting times ahead. / **NIGEL HORROCKS**



State of online Australia



According to the latest quarterly research from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), www.abs.gov.au/ausstats older people, women, the unemployed and those in low-income groups are less likely to have Internet access in Australia. While Net access is becoming more widespread — 6 million people surfed in 1999 — the digital divide persists. Only 13 percent of over 55s had gone online in the 12-month period prior to the survey, while 77 percent of 18-24 year olds had gone online. The ABS calculates that 3.5 million households — half of all households in Australia — had PCs, and 1.9

million, or 28 percent, had Internet access in February 2000. This represents an increase of 300,000 households with PCs and 600,000 with Internet access since February 1999.

State of the online US

Children are fuelling the US Internet explosion, as the number of two-17-year-olds logging on has tripled since 1997, according to a new study by Grunwald Associates www.grunwald.com. The survey found that more than 25 million children in the US are online, up from 8 million in 1997. Peter Grunwald, president of the polling firm said: "The notion that children are an emerging market is no longer true. They have emerged." The study also found that almost two-thirds of all family households have home computers and 46 percent of all family homes are hooked up to the Internet, girls are logging onto the Web as much or more often than boys, and schools are likely to surpass homes as the primary gateway to the Net for kids by 2005.



NET NUMBERS

NETGUIDE'S QUICK TAKE ON THE INTERNET
FACTS AND FIGURES THAT MATTER MOST

60 ▶ % of Australian consumers who still do not trust the Internet with their credit card details. (Citibank)

850 ▶ Internet gambling sites worldwide. (Christiansen Capital Advisors)

5 ▶ every this number of seconds a new domain name is registered. (theGASgroup)

326 and 9,000 ▶ hours and dollars saved per employee annually by companies using email in the

workplace. (Ferris Research Analysts)

57 million ▶ books sold online in 1999, triple the amount sold in 1998. (NPD Research)

500 million ▶ \$ paid by Australian telcos in international data charges each year to American telcos who control all the Internet traffic. (Telstra)

650,000 ▶ new jobs created in the Internet industry in the United States last year. (CNN)

25,000 ▶ number of people signing up to use



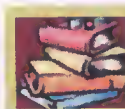
A true guide for those who want to be truly wired

Wired Guide www.wiredguide.com



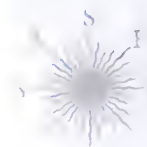
A beginner's guide to computers, software and the Internet. With tips, Q&As, terminologies explained, instructions and various

other resources bristling with practical and useful information, visitors will always leave this site more knowledgeable than when they arrived. It's all easy to understand and best of all, never patronising.



Australian fantasy and science fiction

Aurealis www.aurealis.hi.net



No, not our Federal Parliament, but The Society of Australian Speculative Fiction Writers. This site also doubles as the online home

of *Aurealis*, Australia's only professional science fiction magazine.

mobile phone email in Japan — per day. (NTT Japan)
100,115,412 ▶ downloads of the instant messaging software, ICQ, on www.download.com since it first appeared on that site in 1996. (ICQ)

75 ▶ % of sex offenders who routinely surf the Internet. (Australian Internet Parental Control)

49 ▶ out of the 54 countries in Africa that now have Internet access. (Sangonet)

89 ▶ % of Web surfing time spent searching for free

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Web Lens www.weblens.org/translate

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spyonit.comsm



information, entertainment or prizes. (PC Data)
8-9pm ▶ on a Sunday is the most popular time for Australians to use the Internet. (ACNielsen NetRatings)

2.1 billion ▶ email messages sent in the US every day. (IDG)

800 ▶ terminals housed in what will be the world's largest Internet cafe, to open in October in New York's Times Square. (*The New York Times*)



dot.con

AS LONG AS THERE'S A FOOL BORN EVERY MINUTE, **BRUCE DAVIS-GOFF** WARNS THERE'LL BE AN ONLINE SCAM, SWINDLE, RORT OR RIP-OFF TO PROVIDE THEM WITH A WAY TO PART WITH THEIR MONEY.

beware the web of deceit!

HAVE YOU HEARD THE one about the son of a former Prime Minister from a small African state deposed in a recent coup? He's trying to unfreeze millions of dollars in offshore accounts and he'll pay handsomely for your help. Or the poor Russian guy — his son needs an operation after the local nuke plant radiated the whole family. A small donation would be greatly appreciated. What about the herbal formula that restores hair, reduces cellulite, stops you smoking and increases your sexual prowess?

If you want some, forget it. These offers and others like them are nothing more than scams, hoaxes and frauds being spread online. Chances are, one is heading your way soon and it helps to be able to spot them. The details may differ, but the scam always starts with a spam email or Newsgroup posting offering one, or a mixture of the following "opportunities":

The Business Opportunity. This makes it sound easy to start a profitable business with little work and no cash outlay. It promises an Internet-related business with unbelievable earnings and includes a toll-free number for you to call. If you're lucky, someone selling a pyramid scheme might answer. Another version is the Work at Home scam, where you're offered details to start a great home business. What your money buys is information on how to pull the same



net scams



scam on other people.

The Chain Letter scam

usually starts with a

"Congratulations, you have been selected as winner of blah blah blah".

"Great" you think until you read further and discover you have to pay a fee or join a club to collect your prize.

Even if you do, your prize will never arrive.

The Pump And Dump Stock

scams happen when a small company gets massively touted by someone paid by the company, but pretending to be independent. New investors pour in, which pumps up the stock price, insiders sell the stock for a healthy profit, prices tumble, and the new investors lose.

THE TOP 10 NET SCAMS BY OCCURRENCE

- 1 Online auction fraud
- 2 Pump and dump stock scams
- 3 Pyramid schemes
- 4 Credit card cramming
- 5 Loans and credit card offers
- 6 Credit repair
- 7 Bogus travel prizes
- 8 Business investments
- 9 Health and diet scams
- 10 Work at home plans

Health & Diet

scams offer things like weight loss pills, herbal formulas to liquefy your fat cells and cures for impotence and hair loss. These scams come with phrases like "scientific breakthrough" and testimonials from customers who claim miracles. Avoid them all, especially ones selling

fake Viagra, phony weight loss pills or anything that contains "ancient secret ingredients".

The scam is an offer to sell you lists containing millions of email addresses. The idea is that you become a bulk emailer too. There is a small catch — bulk emailing violates the terms of service of most ISPs and you'll eventually get shut down. The addresses you buy may be invalid too.

The FBI has identified more than 300 unaccredited universities operating on the Internet scamming would-be students around the world of more than US\$200 million a year.

ONLINE PAYMENT TIPS

- ☉ If you use your credit card online regularly, check your monthly credit card statements for any billing errors or unauthorised purchases. If there's an error, you need to find out in time to dispute it.
- ☉ Never use credit cards for ID or age verification. You'll most surely be charged for something, perhaps repeatedly.
- ☉ Always make sure the site you're buying from is on a secure server and use a secure browser that encrypts or encodes the personal information you're sending. Both Netscape and Explorer support secure transactions, other browsers may not — check the security settings for your browser.
- ☉ Always read the privacy policies or FAQs of Web sites where you do online business to see how your personal information will be collected and used.
- ☉ Keep a hard copy of all your online transactions including all email and correspondence.

Health insurance?

I can show you a thing or two!

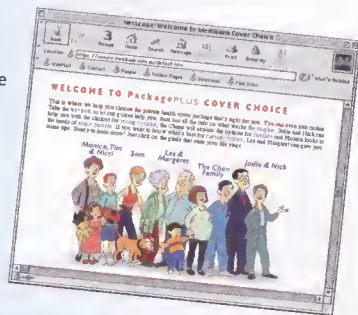


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net scams



The Guaranteed Loan or Credit Card scam. For a small fee, you can have loans and credit cards, with no equity or security needed, regardless of your credit history. The loan turns out to be a valueless list of lenders and the promised credit cards never arrive. This fraud

is sometimes seen masquerading as debt consolidation loans.

Credit Repair scams try to sell a makeover for a bad credit rating. This can't be delivered — only time and a deliberate debt repayment plan will do that - but the scam appeals to consumers with bad credit histories. All they get is advice on fudging loan applications and other potentially fraudulent practices.

Multilevel Marketing or Pyramid scams take your money to join and you get paid by recruiting others. People who get in early collect the money from those coming later, until people stop joining.

10 WARNING SIGNS OF A SCAM

- ⊗ **An amazing prize is involved.**
- ⊗ **It claims to be completely legal.**
- ⊗ **It asks you to "send money now".**
- ⊗ **It implares you to do it today!" because it's a "limited offer".**
- ⊗ **There's a lack of contact information.**
- ⊗ **It claims to be a "revolutionary medical breakthrough".**
- ⊗ **It claims to comply with overseas legislation.**
- ⊗ **It claims same government department or consumer group endorses the scheme. They don't.**
- ⊗ **The post office box is in Vancouver or Richmond in Canada where a lot of these scams are originating.**
- ⊗ **It sounds too good to be true.**

WELL KNOWN HOAXES & SCAMS

The Microsoft Email Hoax

www.ccsd1.k12.wy.us/Resources/Help_Desk/Internet/internet_scams.htm#BGates

The message reads, "Hi, My name is Bill Gates. I have just written an email tracing program that traces everyone this message is forwarded to. I need your help testing it. Forward this to everyone you know. If it reaches 1000 people everyone on the list will receive \$1000"

The Cancer Victim

www.urbanlegends.com/classic/craig.shergold/craig_chicago_tribune.html

Another email about a young boy who is dying of cancer and his last wish is to receive an email from everyone in the world. The American Cancer Society will donate 25 cents for each email received.

The Aids Hoax

www.europe.datafellows.com/hoaxes/verycool.htm

A virus hoax message that reads, "There is a computer virus circulating called A.I.D.S. It will attach itself to your computer and gradually destroy the memory. It then infects your mouse or pointing device and keyboard before destroying your hard drive. It comes in an email entitled Open: Very cool."

SCAM INFORMATION

Fraud Bureau

www.fraudbureau.com/scamalert

Internet Fraud Watch

www.fraud.org

Fraud Defense Network

www.frauddefense.com/Default.cfm

Anti Fraud Tools

www.fraudtools.com

Scambusters

www.scambusters.com

Scampatrol

www.scampatrol.com

Internet Fraud Council

www.internetfraudcouncil.org

International Internet Investigators

safety.iweb.net.au/main.htm

Dirty Web Tricks

w3.one.net/~banks/invaade1.htm

CyberCop

www.cybercops.org

At this point the whole thing collapses and the original promoter disappears with a fat wad of cash.

The **World "Wide-Boy" Web** have taken off in a big way and while most sites are credible and most transactions completed without incident, the medium gives scammers an easy way to rip people off. The individuals selling things may not be whom they say, goods might not arrive or be different from what was promised, and a refund difficult to get. Other problems have emerged like the sale of illegal goods and "shilling", where a seller has associates making

bids to push up the price. The feedback rating system of buyers and sellers, used by most sites, is also open to abuse.

Page Jacking and Mouse Trapping are fairly recent scams that involve diverting a user from their intended page to a scammer's site. Once there, html coding or JavaScript keep the user from leaving. This scam is rife on porn sites where it's not uncommon for a user to be trapped in an endless loop of pop-up windows, referrals and redirects. The

scammer benefits in a number of ways, including bigger payments for referrals and advertising because of increased traffic to the site.

The Kurt Vonnegut "Sunscreen" Hoax

www.wesselenyi.com/Vonnegutstory.htm

A fictional speech written by a female journalist is stolen by a prankster and released online as the work of Kurt Vonnegut, the novelist. It spreads like wildfire and receives critical acclaim. Even Kurt's wife gets sucked in, but when the hoax is discovered the backlash starts and Kurt notes the Internet is "spookily populated by people who will believe anything." It was just a hoax in 1997, but it highlighted the Internet's incredible potential for the dissemination of falsehoods.

The Prime Bank Scam

www.consumer.org.nz/scams/types.html

A dodgy investment scam that claims there is a secret international market in "prime bank" instruments and guarantees high returns by trading them. The Prime Banks are supposedly among the world's top 100 banks, but in reality no such market exists and any money invested promptly disappears offshore.

The amount of Internet-based crime in Australia has doubled in the past nine months, according to the Australian Securities and Investments Commission.



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www.netguide.au.com



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- Unis to make education global...
- E-commerce the go as one-third of Aussie get Web-wired...

In World News...

- Stephen King thinking of releasing Web novel in installments (Wired)
- Web inventor slams online ads (The Register)
- Consumer experts say split won't hurt Microsoft customers (Wired)
- Free Web music - no fad (SF Gate)
- Malaysian Govt sites under hack attack (CNet)

In Business News...

- Australia's 2nd biggest ISP up for grabs (AustralianIT)
- Gates wishes he'd testified (AFR)
- Corel will need to make more cuts (Yahoo/Reuters)

WIN a cool MP3 player!
CLICK HERE

online tutorial

Essential Add-ons...

There's a lot more to being online that just your browser. Plug-in software like Quicktime, Shockwave and other utilities will make your time online much more exciting. We show you where to get them and why you need the[Click here](#)...

Archived tutorials:

- Send it to the Web... how to FTP.
- Are you lost?... using search engines.
- The modem in my life... how modems work.

Net fresh

A new site each day!

Digital Club Network

A steady diet of live streamed gigs from clubs and venues all over the US.

letter to the editor

Dear NetGuide,

Full name

Email address

Cancel

Send it

NetGuide



VOLUME 07
JULY 2000

Featured in this issue

- **Lights, camera, CLICK**
Go behind the scenes as two of our favourite mediums converge - a production where it's becoming difficult to pick the star.
- **Bidding like never before**
Australians have become - per head of population - the world champs of online auctions.
- **A taxing time ahead**
The year of the new tax acronym has thus far brought gasping of teeth and sweats of fear. It need not be so, with a little online help.
- **Stirred, but not shakin' all over**
The music download debate might have forgotten one vital element: for sound quality, MP3s don't yet compare to CDs.

ON SALE 19 APRIL!!!
...only \$2.50 from your nearest book seller, supermarket or petrol station, or [subscribe online](#) and save 22% on the retail price!

Special sections

NetGuideWeb

www.netguide.au.com

net scams



A 57 year-old Perth man recently paid a Florida-based health Web site about \$230 for Viagra pills and got nothing more than sugar tablets in return.

CONSUMER HELP

Consumers Online
www.consumersonline.gov.au
Better Business Bureau
www.bbb.org
Consumer World
www.consumerworld.org
Web WatchDog
www.webwatchdog.com
Australian Competition
& Consumers Commission
www.acc.gov.au
New South Wales
Department of Fair Trading
www.fairtrading.gov.au



Credit Card Cramming involves billing a person for services or goods they never ordered. Cramming is a popular criminal activity built on stolen credit card information, some of it collected by hackers who prowl the Net for non-secure or unencrypted sites. Fly-by-night porn sites have also been known to ask for credit card information as age verification and then illegally bill the owner.

Who Ya Gonna Call?

Proper research can debunk most of these frauds, but perhaps the worst effect of hoaxes and misinformation is the way it can diminish the Internet experience for all users, undermining credibility and adding white noise to a place already vibrantly abuzz.

If you've been a victim of a scam or hoax online, see our list of URLs to report scams. Bear in mind, one country's laws can be very hard to enforce elsewhere and legislation everywhere is still playing catch-up with the Net. Don't stop shopping online or abandon the auctions, just be cautious and use commonsense and resources on the Net to check things out first.



The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission www.accc.gov.au allows anyone from any country to fill in details in the ACCC's Slam-a-Scam page at www.accc.gov.au/ecommm/slam.htm to which people can send scams they have come across. Consumer Affairs does not act as an enforcement agency, but it may pass on scam information to the relevant authorities. ■



The Internet has provided us with new windows on our amazing world. Our team of expert surfers have been peering through those electronic panes to compile this list of...

101

**Great & safe
sites for kids**



Tales from the Billabong

www.fraynetwork.com.au/story

Learn all about Australia, its legends, landscapes, and animals through games and interactive stories.

Stories of the Dreaming

www.dreamtime.net.au

From the cultures of Indigenous Australians, collected from all over Australia.

Story Hour

www.ipl.org/youth/StoryHour

Stories read aloud for your children, via streaming Real Audio.

Tales from the Motherboard

touki.org

Series of children's books that teach about

information technology in a fun and exciting way.

Race Across Time

www.phm.gov.au/rat

The Powerhouse Museum's Australian history game aimed at school-aged children.

Never-Ending Story.

www.coder.com/creations/tale

A choose-your-own-path adventure story like you might read in a book.

Games Kids Play

www.gameskidsplay.net

A complete reference site that includes rules and descriptions of just about any game a kid could play

Universal Studios Kids Playroom

www.mca.com/home/playroom

Games, puzzles, colouring in and other activities featuring characters from Universal

kids' sites



Studios productions.

Wireplay

www.wireplay.com.au

A dial-up gaming experience, linking participants with other gamers via the telephone system, the Internet or cable.

Nintendo

www.nintendo.com

What game list would be complete without a Nintendo site featuring codes for the games & more?

Playstation

www.playstation.com

And since there's a Nintendo site t here also has to be one of these.



The Puzzlemaker

puzzlemaker.school.discovery.com/

Use this site to create your own mazes, puzzles, crosswords, cryptograms, math puzzles & more.

Wicked4Kids

www.wicked4kids.com.au

Designed to be a fun, interactive site for middle to upper primary (elementary) school children.

Crayola

www.crayola.com

The official Crayola Web site contains games for all ages, online arts and crafts, family activities, craft ideas, poetry and colouring pages.

The Color Site

www.thecolorsite.com

Colouring pages, games and puzzles.

Trust Kids

www.trustkids.org

Games, puzzles, treasure hunts and other activities with a focus on teaching history. Site



THE CLASSICS

The Wiggles

www.thewiggles.com.au

Bananas in Pyjamas

www.bananasinpyjamas.com

Humphrey Bear

www.humphreybear.com

Sesame Street

www.ctw.org/sesame

Teletubbies

www.bbc.co.uk/education/teletubbies

Pokemon

www.pokemon.com

Lego

www.lego.com

Winnie The Pooh

www.just-pooh.com/home.html



Gumby On The Web

www.emsphone.com/gumby

Batman

www.fandom.com/batman

Walt Disney World

www.disney.com.au

Garfield

www.garfield.com

Warner Brothers For Kids

www.kids.warnerbros.com

Star Trek For Kids

www.worldkids.net/jaguar

Dr Seuss

www.randomhouse.com/seussville

Santa Claus

www.claus.com

Barney Online

www.barneyonline.com

kids' sites

SAFE SEARCHING RESOURCES

Yahooligans www.yahooligans.com
Web Crawler Kids & Family Channel

www.webcrawler.com/ctw

Lycos For Kids lycoszone.lycos.com

Kid Sites www.kidsites.com

Ask Jeeves For Kids www.ajkids.com

AOL Netfind for Kids

www.aol.com/netfind/kids

KidsClick

sunsite.berkeley.edu/KidsClick!

Info Please for Kids

kids.infoplease.com

Britannica www.britannica.com

sponsored by the National Trust for Historic Preservation (USA)

Kinder-Colour

www.kinderart.com/coloring.htm

Original one-of-a-kind pictures to print & color.

National Science & Technology Centre

www.questacon.edu.au

Shows how science and technology is relevant to our everyday lives.

Interactive News for Kids

ink.news.com.au

A set of tools which allows students to publish their own online news publication.

Historical Atlas Of The 20th Century

users.erols.com/mwhite28/20centry.htm

A pictorial and interactive tour through the changes of the last 100 years.

How Stuff Works

www.howstuffworks.com

The web site of the brilliant books that

illustrate how machines and other things work.

The Lab

www.cbc4kids.ca/regular/the-lab/default.html

A site for young science fans with safe experiments you can try at home.

Painting the Planet

www.araratcc.vic.edu.au/users/jot/painting

An award-winning site building bridges between students via online art projects.

Ask An Expert

www.askanexpert.com

Connects you with hundreds of real world experts, ranging from astronauts to zookeepers.

Kids Kitchen Club

www.kidskitchenclub.com.au

Healthy microwavable meals for children. The site includes games, activities, recipes and links.

A + Plus Math

www.aplusmath.com

A site to interactively help kids learn maths.

The Smithsonian Institute

www.si.edu

The hallowed doors of the Smithsonian opened to reveal a wealth of information.

Students For Exploration of space

www.seds.org

A great site for the budding stargazer, astronaut or potential galaxy explorer.

Study Web

www.studyweb.com

Links for learning, great for the self-starter with a good range of topics.

Atlapedia

www.atlapedia.com

Detailed maps of the whole world.





Biographies

www.biography.com

A site that contains the biographies of 25,000 famous people, including 2,500 video clips.

Star Child

starchild.gsfc.nasa.gov/docs/StarChild/StarChild.html

An educational place for young astronomers courtesy of NASA.

The Education Place

www.eduplace.com/index.html

Elementary resources for teachers, students, and parents.

Link-o-pedia

www.linkopedia.com/kids.html

A guide for parents and children with a collection of fun, interesting and educational sites.

National Geographic For Kids

www.nationalgeographic.com/kids
www.nationalgeographic.com/resources/ngo/maps/

Everything you could possibly imagine in the way

of fun and games for kids including a Pen Pal section. Check out the brilliant map machine with every sort of conceivable view of the world.

Microsoft Encarta Online

encarta.msn.com

The encyclopedic reference for all things educational and informational.

Kids Space

www.kidspace.com/kids

Educational activities for kids, including the Letsfindout.com encyclopedia.

Brightsparks

www.britesparks.com

For families and teachers of gifted children with special needs.

The Fun School

www.funschool.com

Engaging and original educational content.

Enchanted Learning

www.enchantedlearning.com/Home.html

Enchanted learning produces children's educational web sites and software.

PUT A COP IN YOUR COMPUTER

Parents worried about their children being targeted in Internet chat rooms can take security into their own hands with a new Internet monitoring program now available in Australia through newsagents. It's called ComputerCOP www.computercopinfo.com.

While filtering software can stop children accessing certain sites, parents have no control over who their kids are talking to in chat rooms. US statistics show that more than 75% of all convicted sex offenders routinely surf the Net.

ComputerCOP is designed by Bo Dietl, a former New York City policeman. Rather than blocking entry to particular Internet sites, the program allows parents to monitor Internet activity by showing the user exactly whether violent or pornographic sites have been accessed and what has been said in downloaded email or chat room conversations.

Said Mr Dietl: "The Net is a great educational opportunity, but there are many dangers. Parents should not feel they are invading a child's privacy by obtaining a review of their Internet activities.

"It's not snooping. It's not the same as reading a child's diaries. Diaries don't provide a 12 year-old with information on how to build bombs or make dates with sex offenders. The Internet does."

kids' sites



FILTERING SOFTWARE

Cyber Patrol www.cyberpatrol.com

Net Nanny www.netnanny.com

Safesurf www.safesurf.com

Surfwatch www.surfwatch.com

Discovery Channel Online

www.discovery.com

A wealth of information and resources for 10 – 14 year olds.

Little Explorers

www.littleexplorers.com/Dictionary.html

Interactive dictionary for pre-schoolers with oodles of illustrations.

Ippy Online

www.ippyonline.gov.au

Teaches children about innovations, inventions, and protecting good ideas.

Rug Rats Pre-School Page

www.monumental.com/osfan/

Links for games, puzzles and recipes for making really "yucky" stuff that is fun to play with.

Thomas The Tank Engine

www.thomasthetankengine.com

Fun and games with Thomas, the Fat Controller and other characters from the TV series.

My School

members.tripod.com/~myschool/index.html

An excellent site for pre-schoolers to learn ABC's, 1 2 3 's, rhymes and more.

Early Childhood

www.earlychildhood.com

A resource and activity centre for the young ones.

Kids Schooling

www.webschooling.com/



eng_alphabet.html

A comprehensive and entertaining educational site for pre-schoolers.

Kidz.Net

www.kidz.net

A subset of the Net containing hundreds of thousands of educational and entertainment sites.

VicNet Kids & Youth

www.vicnet.net.au/kids

A directory of sites about music, sport, cartoons, clubs, games, holiday fun, and more.

Clean Up Australia

www.cleanup.com.au

Explains what Clean Up Australia is about and

ANIMALS

All About Nature

www.allaboutnature.com/coloring

Discovery Animals

animal.discovery.com/

The Pet Station

petstation.com

Animals On The Microsoft Network

www.microsoft.com/kids/

msb/animals.htm

Animal Photos

www.si.edu/organiza/museums/zoo/

photos/photos.htm

A to Z Of Animals

www.gomilpitas.com/homeschooling/

explore/animals.htm

Pets At Yahoo

pets.yahoo.com

The Electronic Zoo

netvet.wustl.edu/ssi.htm

Cement your customer relationship



It's the question that everyone is asking. How do I build long term, strategic relationships with my customers on the Internet?

WebCentral Portal Builder gives you the ability to provide your customers with "Your Brand" Internet Access, "Your Brand" Business Email, "Your Brand" Web Services, and "Your Brand" ASP (Application Services). You can bundle it with your existing products OR use it to generate an on going revenue stream.

WebCentral Portal Builder can be used to return customers back to your Web Site, as the building block for your B2B (Business to Business) Portal or as a platform to "ASP enable" your existing software products. It's the way to ensure you own the customer from start to finish.

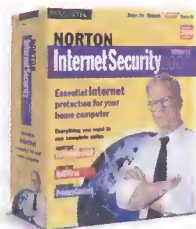
You only need 50 business customers to use WebCentral Portal Builder and we have plans that can accommodate over 50,000 business customers.

WebCentral is Australia's largest Web Hosting/Advanced Application Service Company and we're backed by the global infrastructure of UUNET, the world's largest Internet Service Provider.

For more information please contact WebCentral Corporate Sales on **1 800 800 099** or email corpsales@webcentral.com.au

The Internet is a great place to shop. Particularly if you're a thief.

As the Internet plays an increasingly larger part in our lives, protection has become increasingly important. Norton Internet Security 2000 provides essential Internet protection for your home PC. As well as keeping personal information private, this comprehensive suite includes Norton Personal Firewall to defend against hackers, and award-winning Norton AntiVirus to eliminate dangerous viruses. If you'd like more information, visit us at www.symantec.com.au or call 1800 680 026.



SYMANTEC.

kids' sites



provides tips on reducing and recycling waste.

Family.com

www.family.com

Produced by Disney, it's a site filled with ideas, projects and other resources for families.

Teen Net

www.teen-net.com

Well you know what teens are like — if in doubt check out this site.

Kid Sites

www.kidsites.com

An comprehensive online guide to the best sites for children.

World Kid Network

www.worldkids.net

Something fun and educational for every child, including games, storybooks and links.

Berits Best Kid Sites

www.beritsbest.com

An amazing collection of the best of kid sites covering just about anything you could imagine.

World Village Kidz

www.worldvillage.com/kidz

The usual games, puzzles and activities and links.

Alfy

www.alfy.com

A visual treat containing cool links and activities. Links can be heard in English and Spanish.

The Fox Channel For Kids

www.foxkids.com

Just about every form of entertainment for kids.

e-Play

www.eplay.com

A safe, free educational site with homework help, on-line activity workbooks & references.

Dr Toy

www.drtoy.com

The latest information on the best toys and



educational products, plus articles, resources, and toy-related links.

Go For Kids

www.go.com/Center/Kids

A great starting place for all kids stuff.

Essential Links For Kids

www.el.com/elinks/for/kids/

Another kids portal with lots of places to visit.

Kiddo Net

www.kiddonet.com

KiddoNet is the place to be if you want to make your own home page, create comics, solve ancient mysteries, be a graffiti artist, or learn about science and nature.

Kids Internet Radio

www.kir.org

Kids Internet Radio shares children's music, stories and art from around the world.

Nickelodeon

www.nickelodeon.com.au

An entertainment goldmine for kids. ●



RESPONSIBLE SUPERVISION: ADVICE FOR PARENTS

- ④ Keep the computer in a family room
- ④ Spend time with your child online
- ④ Purchase a filtering software program
- ④ Monitor your credit card bill
- ④ Ask your ISP if it has special childrens' access accounts
- ④ Meet your childrens' online friends
- ④ Encourage your children to use nicknames
- ④ Ask your ISP how to stop sites monitoring your online activity
- ④ Report suspicious activities to police

DISCOUNT SHOPPING & FREE STUFF

The lure of getting something for nothing or bagging a bargain has Internet users across Australia and around the world scrambling for their mouse and modem. Sharon Fawcett's advice is "go get 'em!"

IT SEEMS TO BE of little consequence to bargain-loving Net users that most of the freebies on the Net today are usually no more than a ploy by marketers to catch our attention and keep us coming back to their sites. It hasn't stopped the little incentives on offer transforming the Internet into a scavenger's paradise.

After a day spent surfing the web for free stuff you'll find your hard drive jammed with screensavers and software, your letter box overflowing with complementary issues of magazines, and your mailbox crammed with free online newsletters. When we last checked, Web sites in Australia and overseas were offering free email, phone calls, auctions, software, voice mail, digital photo storage, shampoo, magazines, chocolate, tech support, greeting cards, jokes, beauty products, pet food, music, and of course, Internet service provision.

There are even sites, like NCBuy www.ncbuy.com/announcer, that send you free

discounts & free stuff

announcements of the newly available free stuff on the Internet. At NCBuy you can select from particular areas of freebie interest and you'll be joining more than 900,000 people if you do.

But what about the real bargains? Can the Internet actually save you money on a new set of tyres, a mobile phone, a carton of wine, or a romantic weekend away? It certainly can, especially now that the shop-a-docket phenomenon has burst into cyberspace.

The electronic coupon revolution is here

Many Internet users are reluctant to shop online, concerned about entering their credit card details into a web site. Or they simply may prefer to actually go shopping. After all, you can't enjoy the feel of a

cashmere wrap via a web site, or test drive a sleek new sports car.

Instead, the Internet has become a way for shoppers to become educated consumers.

We spend time on the web researching products, comparing prices, and maybe even finding a way to purchase the item offline for a discounted price. This is the way in which electronic coupons combine the research capabilities of the Internet with more traditional methods of shopping.

So, what's an e-coupon? They're like the coupons you find on the back of a supermarket docket, except there are many more to choose from and you don't have to buy thirty loaves of bread to get a free meal at the local Black Stump Restaurant.



WORLDWIDE MEGA FREEBIE SITES

Best Freebies

www.bestfreebies.com

Free Shop

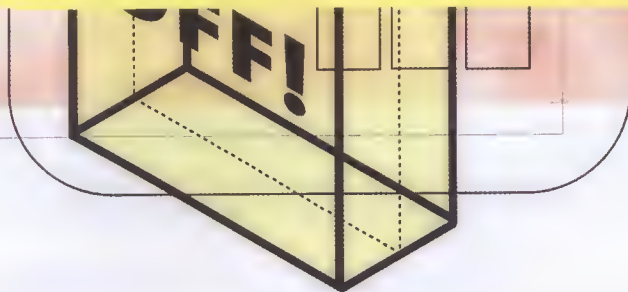
www.freeshop.com

All Advantage

www.ollodvontoge.com



THERE ARE LOTS OF PLACES
ON THE NET OFFERING
FREEBIES BUT THE BEST
PLAN IS TO STICK TO SITES
THAT ARE AUSTRALIAN.



discounts & free stuff



Savingumoney.com.au

www.savingyoumoney.com.au, an e-coupon portal for consumers, launched their Australian site at the end of May. To redeem a coupon, consumers follow three easy electronic steps: select the coupon, clip it, and print it.

There are more than 1,400 coupons on the site and the savings range from a free muffin to \$500 discounts on high-end sporting goods.

According to Bradley Field, Managing Director of savingumoney.com.au, the site bridges the gap between shopping online and physically walking into a store and making a purchase.

"The e-coupons are designed to drive traffic into a bricks and mortar location," Field said. "The site provides a directory of special offers and allows people to confirm their decision in store. With the GST now upon us, people are looking for a way to save 10% rather than spend it."

50% Off a Wide Range of Hall Runners

Also Have a Chance to Win a \$1500 Rug at Store.

Not valid with any other offer.

189-193 Great North Rd
Five Dock, NSW, 2046

Tel: 9712 4256
Email: kvik@ig.com.au

Expires: 20-MAY-2001

Gallerie Ottoman



Savingumoney.com.au is not the only Australian e-coupon site. Another, www.moneysaver.com.au, offers those who register the chance to win \$10,000.

Freebies at home

So coupons are great if you actually want to spend money. But what about the free stuff?

Sites for discounts, prizes & freebies

Cosmetics www.beauty.com

Tech Support www.nowonder.com

Prizes www.ezywin.com.au

Auctions www.stuff.com.au

Cantests www.eosycosh.com.au

Coffee www.coffeeco.com.au

Paid for surveys signup.greenfieldonline.com

Paid for listening www.radiofreecosh.com

Jokes www.joke-list.com

Travel newsletters owoy.com

Psychic readings www.800predict.com

Cartaans www.bitmagic.com

Star Gossip entertainment.sleuth.com

Research of affiliates inforoutics.com

There are lots of places on the Net offering freebies but the best plan is to stick with sites that are Australian. Otherwise, you'll find yourself ploughing through a four-page survey only to find out the free Pokemon cards are for US residents only.

Click onto www.ozfreebies.com.au where you'll find a great selection of links to free offers, free products, giveaways and competitions. All the links have been checked to ensure the offers are open to Australian residents.

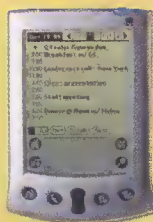
According to Klaus Turni, the webmaster of Ozfreebies, Internet users are crazy not to enter online competitions.

"Competitions online are completely free," Turni said. "You don't even have to buy a postage stamp to send in your entry. And it's fun."

If you're a competition junkie, add www.competitionclub.com.au to your bookmarks. Club membership is free (of course) and there are more than 400 competitions on the site. If you can't

SAVE & SMILE

Palm Vx



\$675

Philips Simpson NEC Kelvinator Sharp Teac Nike Adidas Rayban Oakley Kenwood Sanyo
Compaq Acer IBM Kodak Canon Epson Quicken Adobe Sony Reebok Nokia LG Motorola Ericsson Nintendo LG Sunbeam Breville

With over 120,000 products and hundreds of top brands, our savings really will put a smile on your face.

Home
Health &
Fitness

Computers
Music

Software
Kitchen

Electronics
Laundry

Mobile
Phones
Home & Lawn
Care

Games
Climate
Control

www.ystore.com.au



discounts & free stuff

The world's most popular free instant messaging system, ICQ, is downloaded about 100,000 times per day from CNet's www.download.com. Read the ICQ review on page 28



FREE EMAIL

The most well known and widely used freebie on the web is email. The biggest advantage of web based mail is that you can check your free account through a web browser from any PC or Internet enabled device: at home, in the office or from an Internet café in Sudan.

Most Internet users have signed up for a free Web-based email account like Hotmail, Yahoo or Start.com.au, so why not find yourself a more memorable email address? www.emailaddresses.com is a directory which lists more than 1,000 free email services. You're sure to find the email address that suits your personality. Here's a list of Australia's most popular free email services:

www.hotmail.com
mail.yahoo.com.au
mail.excite.com.au
www.todoy.com.au
www.looksmore.com.au
www.email.com
www.start.com.au



Visit Australia's No.1 shopping centre.

The highly regarded Red Sheriff RedGauge* ratings has just named tradingpost.com the number one online shopping site.

tradingpost.com

*Red Sheriff [IMR] March 2000

Win MP3 Players



win something here, you just aren't trying hard enough.

EclubOz

www.ecluboz.com.au is

another site where you can score yourself a bargain. The trick with this site is that you have to actually spend money before you're eligible for a freebie.

At eClubOz you gain points by shopping at recommended sites or referring a friend. Once you've built up enough points you can trade them in. An I-mac computer will cost you 220,000 points. Or if you have fewer points to spend, a Greater Union double movie pass will only set you back 2,400 points.

FREE NET ACCESS

It all started with free web browsers. Then came free web page hosting, soon followed by free email. In more recent times we've been offered free PCs (bundled with paid for Internet access) and then free Internet access. Now, the US is just getting used to free broadband Internet access.

Still, there's no need to pay \$4 an hour for surfing the Net when there are several free Internet service providers in Australia. But, there's a catch: you'll see more ads, and the number of sites you can visit via some free accounts may be limited. You may also experience some delays getting connected, so popular are some services.

Following is a list of the better-known services in case you're keen to give one a try:

www.gocconnect.com.au

www.freeonline.com.au

www.globalfreeway.com.au

www.freeisp.com.au

www.free.net.au

Freebies overseas

If you just can't get enough free stuff from Australian sites, take a virtual trip to the US. But remember, a lot of the stuff is available only to US residents. At the very least, browsing the American sites will provide a strong indication of what to expect here in due course. Your safest play is to visit the giveaway portals where you'll find a broader selection of freebies and competitions.

100 Percent Free Stuff

www.100percentfreestuff.com is a searchable site which includes a huge selection of giveaways. You can search for the exact item you're looking for or spend as long as you like browsing the different categories.



NetGuide recommends you visit About.com's superlative freebies guide at freebies.about.com.

protection is easy

Avoid irritation and disappointment. Shield yourself from expensive buy-back fees. If penetrating the online market is in your agenda, slip into NetRegistry's FREE domain name availability check to find out if your ideal domain name is in use, then register your preferred choice with Australia's fastest most efficient internet registration company - NetRegistry.

WE'VE GOT YOU COVERED!



NetRegistry
Protect Your Online Future

Simply visit www.netregistry.com.au
or call 1800 78 80 82 to make a start.
It really is that simple.

discounts & free stuff



MORE FREE STUFF COMING SOON



A merger between the Australian Radio Network (ARN) and The Internet Amusements Group (TIAG) www.tiag.com.au will lead to the launch of a



series of Web sites specialising in free competitions and games of chance. These competitions will have links with ARN's radio stations, and will also be promoted extensively on the air. TIAG's founder, David Hayes, said the first site to be launched will be eScratchie, where players can scratch and win prizes. This will be closely followed by eCantest, a



range of free games. Hayes said there had been a strange response to similar initiatives in other countries. "Free competition sites in the US are attracting massive audiences and we expect extremely high levels of participation here when we launch eScratchie and eCantest," he said.



Check out the free stuff list. It's a random listing of the best freebies the site has to offer.

Free Stuff Centre www.freestuffcenter.com is another US site packed with goodies. The site includes books,

catalogues, contests, screen savers, software, sounds, games, graphics, and greeting cards. All

you need is a mouse and a healthy index finger.

The Freebie Directory www.freebiedirectory.com looks just like a search engine. The only difference is all the sites listed are giving something away.

If you don't have time to spend trawling web sites for free stuff that interests you, sign up for a newsletter. Free.com www.free.com will send you a newsletter (for free) and keep you informed about the latest and hottest freebies on the web. Every issue includes a comprehensive list of free products, services and samples. ■

Smart shoppers use the-e-guide.

<http://www.e-guide.com.au>

Read

all about it!

All the news that's fit to scroll

Among the Net's many and varied attractions, news on demand has always ranked highly with users, putting them in touch with their suburb, their nation and their world. With the Internet, anyone is a reporter. Anyone is a publisher. Increasingly, people are going online to find out what's happening — mostly, the surveys claim, at the expense of their television time. **Louise Crawford** provides us with some news on the news.

SO WHAT KIND OF medium is the Internet as a place to keep in touch with a rapidly changing world? Well, for starters, it's often not very diverse! This is simply because it's cheaper for most big name Web sites to buy someone else's news rather than generate their own.

An investigation by Leicester University's Centre for Mass Communication Research in England www.le.ac.uk/mc/mc.html, took a close look at the Web's dominant news sites. It discovered that when it comes to international news, the Web's leading commercial portal sites act primarily as distributors of news, produced and packaged by the world's two largest news agencies — the Associated Press of America (AP) www.ap.com and Reuters www.reuters.com.

The University found that the information offered rarely comes from news providers other than these two sources, with the exception of services run by major broadcasters and newspapers, which mix their own original content with that from the agencies.

In Australia, this can be seen with the major news sites like News Interactive www.news.com.au, Fairfax's f2 www.f2.com.au, and ninemsn www.ninemsn.com.au utilising both the Reuters and Associated Press feeds whilst also reflecting much of what is in the print and broadcast versions of their own national and regional news.



In the constantly competitive battleground for delivering the latest news, this often means a newspaper story that appears in the morning

will often be replaced by an updated Web version in the afternoon, probably drawn from an agency wire service.

All this is important, because in the case of international news studies have shown that news consumers tend to follow overseas news more, via the Net, than through national or local newspapers. Conversely, the same study indicated that news consumers are dissatisfied with the quality of local news available on the Net and are more likely to get this from their local newspaper.



The world's most popular news site www.cnn.com is now available in seven languages — Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, Swedish, Norwegian, Danish & Japanese.

news online

The locals

There are now, however, hundreds of Australian newspapers online that go into great detail about the relevant local events of the regions they serve. The National Library of Australia has the most extensive list at www.nla.gov.au/oz/npapers.html.



Some of the best we have come across are *The Byron Shire Echo* www.echo.net.au, which vigorously reports the permanent anti-development feeling on the far north coast of NSW. Likewise, *The Advocate*, www.theadvocate.com.au in Burnie, Tasmania provides an energetic view on what's happening in northern Tassie. We particularly enjoyed *The Blue Mountains Gazette* www.localnews.com.au/bmgazette which made us wish we were there, and *The Border Mail* www.bazar.com.au/local/bormail which, as one of the oldest newspapers in Australia,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 64 ➔



The recent military coup in Fiji graphically portrayed how an independent local news site www.fijilive.com can be catapulted to the forefront of international news. The Suva-based managing director of fijilive, Yashwant Gaunder, said: "A chance like this comes once in a lifetime. We'll be part of history."

THE LOCAL NEWS OUTLETS ONLINE

The Whyalla Focus (**Whyalla SA**)

www.whyallafocus.com

Byron Shire Echo (**Byron Bay NSW**)

www.echo.net.au

The Warrnambool Standard (**Warrnambool VIC**)

www.warrnambooltoday.com.au

The Advocate (**Burnie TAS**)

www.theadvocate.com.au

The Border Mail (**Albury NSW**)

www.bazar.com.au/local/bormail

The Courier (**Ballarat VIC**)

www.thecourier.com.au/thecourier

Daily Liberal (**Dubbo NSW**)

www.localnews.com.au/dailyliberal

ALTERNATIVE & UNDERGROUND NEWS SITES

AlterNet www.alternet.org

The Onion www.theonion.com

Crickey www.crickey.com.au

Active www.active.org.au

Urban 75 London www.urban75.com

Private Eye www.private-eye.co.uk

One World www.oneworld.org

The Nation www.thenation.com

Australian News Commentary

www.australian-news.com.au

The Village Voice New York

www.villagevoice.com

Media Channel

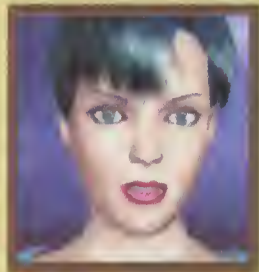
www.mediachannel.org

The Drudge Report

www.drudgereport.com



ANANOVA THE AVATAR: THE FUTURE FACE OF NEWS IS HERE



She has green hair, a button nose and a voice that demands attention. She is 28 years old, 5 feet 8, a "quietly intelligent" woman who enjoys sports statistics, The Simpsons, Mozart and Oasis. And she has already received two marriage proposals.

The news she reads is real, but Ananova is not. She is a virtual news anchorwoman, created by the British Press Association (PA) to read news, sport, weather and stock quotes from her own Web site at www.ananova.com.au. Ananova winks, nods, arches her eyebrows and expresses surprise or amusement as she reads the news.

In her first month, Ananova received 1.6 million unique visitors, ranking her Web site among the most popular news sites in the world. She is created and programmed in England, but she is most popular in Canada, the United States and Hong Kong.

Ananova is what computer scientists call an "agent" or "avatar." She's a mass of sophisticated speech-recognition software and computing power designed to put a human face — and personality — on our interactions with machines.

But all this could be mere tinkering compared with what's coming. Someday, through the magic of advanced audio and video technology and super-fast Internet connections, you may be able to get your news from a digitally constructed "avatar" of your choosing. Such lifelike human representations could be programmed to move and talk in realistic but nonetheless artificial settings. Consider the benefits. Instead of writing text messages as we do now, we could create a chat room where my avatar could walk in, sit down and talk to your avatar. No? You don't think so?

Morgan & Banks

YOUR CAREER JOURNEY IS ONLINE

<http://www.morganbanks.com.au>





Swamped by news that doesn't interest you? Missing the news you need? Go to excite.com.au where you can choose your news categories from domestic, international, entertainment, business, sports and technology. And as well as choosing your categories, you can also choose how many articles you want.

 **excite.com.au** make the web your own

news online

seems to have successfully transferred its old media reputation to its online news coverage.

Play it again...

The problem is that the sites run by the major publishers and broadcasters usually offer online content closely tied to their print and television content. In this respect, the Web can be a bit of an echo chamber and, occasionally, an expansion or new distribution platform for what media companies are already offering their readers, listeners and viewers. Of course, this is no problem if you live in Sydney and want to read the daily news from Perth, but some of us just like more places to find all sorts of news.

Unfiltered and independent

The good news for all you news junkies is that if the big sites don't satisfy your news cravings, there are many news alternatives. Best known and most respected of these is BBC Online www.bbc.co.uk. With 170 staff members, it provides quality and credible news and information that relies on original content, with frequent use of audio and video drawn from BBC

NEWSPAPERS THAT REALLY LINK TO THE FUTURE



When the Post and Courier newspaper www.charleston.net in Charleston, South Carolina, went to press

on June 12 this year, it became the first printed newspaper in the world to include links to the Internet on its pages. By providing readers with a laser pen that is attached to their PC, they can then scan URLs and tiny barcodes embedded in the news stories, which link straight to the associated websites, including information from advertisers. The technology, developed by Go Code www.gocode.com, is an experiment for the newspaper. GoCode chairman, Tom Pickens, said the technology is an attempt to bridge the gap between newspapers and online media by creating a seamless network of information.

reports and archives. If there is a breaking story, BBC Online promises to post it within 60 seconds.

Some of the other better-known alternative news providers on the web include The Drudge Report www.drudgereport.com, which has stories centred around the seedier aspects of American business and political life, and the UK's infamous Private Eye www.private-eye.co.uk, a satirical attack on Britain's latest and greatest.

Australia's ABC www.abc.net and SBS www.sbs.com.au offer unique angles and diverse content on mainstream news events often ignored by the major commercial outlets.

Some of the best and most interesting of the Australian alternative news sites include Crickey www.crikey.com.au. This often hilarious site is the

MAJOR AUSTRALIAN NEWS ONLINE

The Sydney Morning Herald www.smh.com.au

The Age www.theage.com.au

News Limited www.news.com.au

ABC www.abc.net

ninemsn www.ninemsn.com.au

The Canberra Times www.canberratimes.com.au

Motorola www.motorola.com has created a computer-driven character named Mya, a spike-haired female "cyber-assistant" that will read e-mail messages, stock quotes, news, sports scores and weather forecasts from the Internet via wireless and conventional phone connections.

THE GREAT NEWSPAPERS OF THE WORLD ONLINE

The New York Times

www.nyt.com

The Washington Post

www.washingtonpost.com

Los Angeles Times

www.latimes.com

Chicago Tribune

www.chicagotribune.com

The Times, London

www.times.co.uk

The Independent

www.independent.co.uk

Irish Times

www.ireland.com

Le Monde

tout.lemonde.fr

El Pais

www.elpais.es

La Repubblica

www.repubblica.it

South China Morning Post

www.scmp.com

The Times of India

www.timesofindia.com

THE BIG NEWS OUTLETS

CNN www.cnn.com

BBC www.bbc.co.uk

Fox News www.foxnews.com

Bloomberg www.bloomberg.com

Reuters www.reuters.com

ABC www.abc.net.au

Time www.time.com

Newsweek www.newsweek.com



brainchild of Stephen Mayne, a former senior advisor to the ex-Premier of Victoria, Jeff Kennett. Crickey takes great delight in lampooning the

comfy relationship big business enjoys with politicians in Australia and how "movers and shakers" have much to answer for.

The news at Active www.active.org.au is incredibly quirky and, like its name suggests, is activist in nature. This is the place to go if you want to keep abreast of student politics and social change issues affecting Australia's big cities. Other great sources for alternative angles on the news include Australian News Commentary www.australian-news.com.au (self-proclaimed antithesis to our major news organizations) and The Queensland Independent www.uq.edu.au/jm/tqi (the first Australian newspaper published on the Net).



The fact is that now, via the Web, anyone can report the news in the way they see it rather than how the commercial or political community dictates. Whilst this has produced a rash of conspiracy theories about the corporate publishers who produce the majority of our news, it also provides some much-needed alternative views on how some people see the news. ■

IF YOU COME ACROSS A USEFUL SOURCE OF ONLINE NEWS, LET US KNOW AT editor@netguide.aust.com

One of the world's most famous tabloid newspapers, *The New York Daily News* www.nydailynews.com, runs the world's largest online photo database at www.dailynewspix.com. With more than 2 million images, it is a remarkable collection of the modern history of perhaps the world's most dynamic city.

netguidelive

>> YOUR NUMBER ONE ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

liveconcertsontheNet



23 July, 7:30PM

Metallica

Symphony and Metallica
www.channelv.com.au

24 July, Time TBA

Disturbed

plays live at
www.liveconcerts.com



24 July, 2PM

Preston Shannon

live at BB King's Blues Club.

Shannon is a Memphis-based blues guitarist whose voice has been described as a cross between Otis Redding and Bobby Womack.

www.liveonthenet.com

1 August, 11AM

Bern Nix Trio

live at the Blue Note.
www.bluenote.Net



5 August, 7:30PM

Jeff Buckley recorded live in Chicago. Buckley only released one full-length album, *Grace*, before his tragic drowning death in 1997. 1998's *Sketches For My Sweetheart the Drunk* and the recent *Mystery White Boy* album were released posthumously.
www.channelv.com.au

6 August, 7:30PM

No Doubt live in Holland
www.channelv.com.au

12 August, 7:30PM

Ex-Take That member **Robbie Williams** performs for an exclusive audience at London's BBC radio theatre.
www.channelv.com.au

13 August, 7:30PM

Go on the road with teen-dream **Christina Aguilera**
www.channelv.com.au

19 August, 7:30PM

Repeat of **U2's** "Rattle and Hum".
www.channelv.com.au

20 August, 7:30PM

Documentary detailing the early "dark days" of ex-Spice Girl **Geri Halliwell's** solo career.
www.channelv.com.au

26 August, 7:30PM

Eagle Eye Cherry live at the Metro in Sydney. The brother of Neneh Cherry, Eagle Eye is best known for his 1998 hit "Save Tonight". www.channelv.com.au

27 August, 7:30PM

"Feelin' So Good" with **Jennifer Lopez**. She chats about her music, movies and life with boyfriend, Puff Daddy, who is currently facing criminal charges. www.channelv.com.au



movie sites

**Reindeer Games**

www.roughcut.com/reviews/movies/vault2000/reindeer_games.html

Ben Affleck plays Rudy Duncan, a man who has recently been paroled from jail and assumes the identity of his murdered cellmate so he can meet the

woman his cellmate was romantically involved with (Charlize Theron). When her brother learns that Rudy has connections to an Indian casino he forces him into pulling off a dangerous heist.

Return to Me

www.mgm.com/rtm

Minnie Driver and David Duchovny star in this romantic comedy about a couple who fall for each other in unusual circumstances. When his wife dies, Bob Rueland (Duchovny) thinks he will never be able to love another woman again. He stumbles across Grace Briggs (Driver) when he comes into the

restaurant where she works one night. They later discover that the heart Grace received in her recent transplant operation was, in fact, that of Bob's late wife.



happening sounds



TRIP-HOP MUSIC is a blend of melodies and beats that relies heavily on sampling and other forms of electronica to create a densely-layered soundscape. It was pioneered in the early 90s by Bristol-based artists including Portishead and Tricky, with the torch currently being carried by acts such as Moloko, Lamb and Air. Lots of sites are devoted to spreading the sound, including Blue Jams www.bluejams.co.uk and Breakbeat Science www.breakbeatscience.com. To listen online, tune into Dublin's pirate radio station Xfm www.isis.ie/xfm, which boasts a format of trip-hop and underground dance.

mp3update

latest MP3 news



Myplay locks up tight

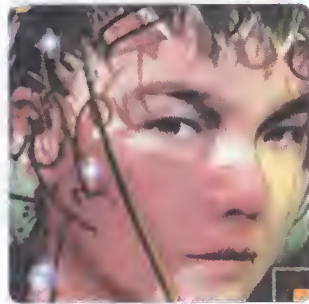
US company Myplay www.myplay.com has recently launched its Infinite Locker service, which allows users to upload MP3 files to the site for personal use so they can listen to them anywhere. Unlike the similar service that landed MP3.com www.mp3.com in legal

hot water, the files must be loaded into the users' own personal "locker" before they can be accessed.

"Safe" site for file exchange

Scour.com www.scour.com recently released Scour Exchange, a file-sharing program that sources a database for MP3s that you can download with impunity. The company claims installation is painless and downloading time is minimal as long as the person you're sharing files with has a

connection speed at least as fast as yours. Since its launch, at least 10,000 people have always been logged in and this number is expected to boom over the coming months.



Your MUSIC tips



Mane Event Productions

www.mane-event.com

This site promotes lesser-known

and unsigned artists with free MP3 downloads of up to 20 songs.

Art Attack Team

personal.eunet.fi/pp/simon/CLIPS4.html

Get a taste of Finnish R'n B with the free downloads at this site in MP3, RealAudio and .wav format.

Spyglass

www.spyglassmusic.com

This Seattle-based band have received smatterings of airplay on

alternative radio in Australia. Check out the free downloads and see if you agree with reviewers who have compared them to the likes of Swervedriver and Radiohead.



If you have put your own MP3 tracks online or found some cool ones, spread the word. Email editor@netguide.aust.com

**chaos
agent
#164**

chaosmusic.com

THE AUSTRALIAN ONLINE MUSIC STORE



**Become a
Chaos Agent!**

Your mission: download the Pluggers track "Time for Swinging" now at ChaosMusic. Weapons: Free tracks, giveaways and discounts on a massive catalogue of cds, dvds and games.

ADAMsandler



EVER SINCE HIS CAREER

propelled him to attention as "the new Jim Carrey" with a string of comic hits including *Airheads* and *Billy Madison*, Adam Sandler has been too busy to explore the far reaches of the Net.

Sandler, 33, says he doesn't go "undercover" and chat on the Internet, and admits to being quite "clueless" about the workings of the World Wide Web. He says he

periodically checks the updates on his official site

www.adamsandler.com and the homepage of his most recent movie, 1999's *Big Daddy* **www.sony.com/bigdaddy**.

While Sandler may be too busy for the Net, members of his family are fond of checking in to see what the fans are saying.

"My father likes to go in and see what they're saying about me," Sandler says. "And he only tells me negative things. And then he curses. Then he hangs up angrily. And he resumes eating."

Sandler's career began with stand-up slots on Saturday

Night Live before crossing over to movies with parts in *Mixed Nuts* and *Going Overboard*. Since 1995 he has made a name for himself starring as goofy characters with a heart of gold, playing everything from a drunken hotel heir in *Billy Madison* to a golfer who has to play tournaments to save his grandmother's house in 1996's *Happy Gilmore*.

His most recent projects include parts in *The Wedding Singer* with Drew Barrymore and *Big Daddy*, which grossed over US\$160 million at the box office and established Sandler's long-term pulling-power as a Hollywood celebrity.

Sandler is also interested in working behind the scenes, and has just launched a company, Happy Madison Studios, which produced *Deuce Bigalow Male Gigolo*. He has also released four comedy albums, the latest of which was nominated for a Grammy award.

Sandler is currently dating a model, Jackie Titone. Rumours are currently circulating that the couple are engaged, however, nothing has been officially confirmed. / CAROLINE WARNES

ADAM SANDLER'S links



Little Nicky

www.upcomingmovies.com/littlenicky.html

Filming has been completed on Sandler's next stint in front of the cameras. *Little Nicky* also stars Patricia Arquette and Harvey Keitel. It will be released later in the year.



The Cosby Show

www.superstation.com/tv/cosby/index.htm

Before Saturday Night Live and movie superstardom, Sandler had a small role on this popular 80s sitcom as a friend of Theo's.



New York University

www.nyu.edu

Sandler has a degree in fine arts from this New York institution.

fansites



Adam Sandler Archive

welcome.to/adamsandler

An Adam Sandler Page

www.geocities.com/Hollywood/Makeup/5410

Temple of Adam Sandler

www.sandlertemple.com

Watergirl's

Adam Sandler Scrapbook

www.geocities.com/Hollywood/Trailer/5969



Adam Sandler's Page

www.geocities.com/Hollywood/Theater/4567

The Adam Sandler Experience

adamsandler.jt.org

Canteen Boy's

Adam Sandler Page

www.geocities.com/Hollywood/Boulevard/4541/canteen_page.html

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something better to do?***



Films, restaurants, music, bars, clubs, sports, events and exhibitions. You name it, CitySearch will help you find it. **Just visit www.citysearch.com.au for the quick and easy guide to what's on.**

 **citysearch.com.au**

FIND OUT WHAT'S HAPPENING

bestsites

Top 50

Creative Writing	74
Time Management	76
Polo	78
Crafts	80
Coffee	82
Ghosts and Fairies	84
Conspiracy Theories	86

Site of the Month	88
& Homegrown	
Shop Guide	91
Net Travel	92

82



80

Paid to surf >>
Helen Doohan

Point your browsers to
www.netguide.au.com
and follow the link to
Top 50, where you'll
find all this month's
URLs.



84



CREATIVE WRITING

HOTSPOT



MightyWords

www.mightywords.com

It's a mighty big world out there and it can be mighty difficult for a struggling author to get their work noticed.

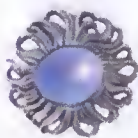
MightyWords aspires to break down the controlling aspect of the publishing world by



giving authors the ability to digitally publish and sell their work as eMatter. Once registered with Mighty words, it's a simple process

for authors to upload their work, set their price, and hopefully, wait for the money to come in. MightyWords assures all documents are protected from theft through its secure digital rights management solution. eMatter can also be bought from this site. A

quick perusal of the bestsellers does indicate that self-help "books" are popular but there is also fiction in the Top 20 list.



Rememory.com

www.rememory.com

Remember the story about your Grandma that everyone loves so much you ought to get it published? Well, now you can, thanks to Rememory.com, which publishes online the "real stories" of "real people". These stories are categorised into a variety of different topics, and writers have a chance of winning one of the many prizes on offer. So delve into those old school diaries, or write down the details of that fun-filled Contiki holiday spent in Europe.

Screenwriting

www.screenwriting.about.com/arts/screenwriting

Dreaming of doing a Matt Damon and Ben Affleck by winning an Oscar for best original screenplay? This site will certainly set you on the way with the huge amount of practical information it provides free to all aspiring screenwriters. The site is part of About.com, a network of niche vertical sites for marketers and users. A professional screenwriter has overseen the construction of a plethora of topics covering every aspect of screenwriting from character structure to copyright details.

Nestle Write Around Australia

www.writearound.com.au

Nestle Write Around Australia is a creative writing program which is seeking to ignite the imaginations of senior primary school students. The program involves a national competition and writing workshops, which are hosted by published authors and held in public libraries throughout Australia. Although the site is aimed at pre-teens, there is a section for



Nestlé
Write Around
Australia

teachers providing an in-depth look at the benefits for the students undertaking the program, and advice on how to get the class involved in both the competition and the workshops.

Romance Writers of Australia

www.powerup.com.au/rwaust

"As the sun set slowly over the Harbour Bridge, Rodney clasped Kylie to his chest and kissed her passionately..." Ah romance, where would we be without it? It is RWA's mission to boost the careers of potential romance writers by helping them get their work published. The RWA site provides information on the resources a writer may expect upon joining the association. These resources include a newsletter, a writers' support group, and competition details. For those in the back o' Bourke who may be struggling to think of steamy sentences, don't despair. Help is readily available through RWA's Isolated Writer's Scheme.

Inkspot

www.inkspot.com

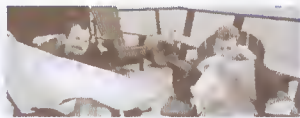
The Net contains so many helpful sites on creative writing that you would be hard pressed not to acquire at least some writing skills. Established five years ago, Inkspot is one of the better sites for the variety of information it contains; everything from the latest breaking news in the publishing world to helpful hints for young writers.



Another bonus of the site is the free newsletter

Inklings, which

supplies the budding writer with advice from industry professionals.



The Bulwer-Lytton Fiction Contest Home Page

www.bulwer-lytton.com

It was a dark and stormy night..." Snoopy was not the first to write this immortal line; it was actually penned way back in 1830 by Edward George Bulwer-Lytton. Professor Scott Rice made this literary discovery prompting him to found the Bulwer-Lytton



Fiction Contest. The contest challenges entrants to write the opening sentence to the "worst possible of all novels." Penguin has published a collection of the best entries. This is a sample of what you can expect: "Andre, a simple peasant, had only one thing

on his mind as he crept along the east wall: Andre creep ... Andre creep ... Andre creep."

Chatrooms & Newsgroups

www.egroups.com/messages/

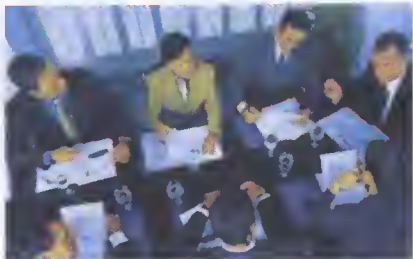
01A_Creative_Writing

www.inkspot.com/forums/topics.html

Links @ www.netguide.au.com

TIME MANAGEMENT

HOTSPOT

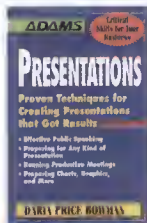


Success Technologies

www.success.net.au



If you are constantly rushing into that important morning meeting 10 minutes late with hair in disarray, clothes askew and important notes all over the place, maybe it's time to admit to your time management problem and seek help from a professional. Success Technologies provides Australian workers with the skills to manage time effectively through its range of seminars. The company's site provides details on all its seminars, the topics of which include Time and Territory Management, Speed-Reading for Success, and Strategies to Conflict Resolution. The site also contains a free newsletter, and online tutorials, which can be downloaded in Real Audio or MP3 file format.



Businesstown.com

www.businesstown.com

"Just as a well-run business follows a budget in spending money, an effective businessperson should also follow a budget (or schedule) in spending time."

Just how time is better spent is detailed at this site, which is aimed at the small business operator. While the information is not extensive it does present a shift away from the traditional time management rules of doing more things in less time to using initiative and creativity in ensuring trivial issues are put aside, and important goals are attained.

Time Management Institute

www.gamonnet.com/english/welcome.html

Are you suffering from one of the four major time management diseases? Victims of "Timedonitis" (inflammation of time) suffer from work overload. "Lifophilia" (last in – first out) sufferers have difficulty focusing on one task. "Chronophagia" (that which eats up time) syndrome causes its victims to feel a loss of concentration through constant interruption. And those who are struck down by "Chronic Yesitis" (to say yes to everything) do not know how to say no.

Mind Tools

www.mindtools.com/pages.html

Mind Tools is aiming to promote the intellect of the masses by providing information and shareware designed to help people think their way to success. Time management features strongly on this site, as Mind Tools believes it has a major part in enhancing a person's achievements. For those seeking ways to



improve their efficiency at work, this site provides a generous overview of what you can achieve through managing time effectively. The site covers issues ranging from avoiding

procrastination to getting rid of unnecessary jobs.

Getting a Grip on Time

www.gettingagripontime.com



Eight years ago, Robyn Pearce was a stressed working mum of six. Finding time was always an issue until a friend suggested she learn a few time management techniques. Now, Robyn travels the world as a time management specialist, and is an

author of a popular self-help book: "Getting a Grip on Time". Robyn's site contains her top time management tips, details about her merchandise, and a free set of red and green flags designed to reduce interruptions at work.



Day-Timer

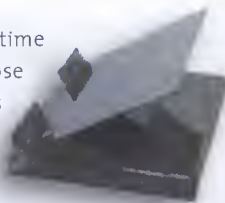
www.daytimer.com

A pioneer in the field of time management, Day-Timer was started in Pennsylvania more than 50 years ago. Apparently, it was Day-Timer that created the modern personal organiser, which has long been established as a valuable tool in time

management. This site is your one stop shop for Day-Timer products including organisers, software, diaries,

stationery, and other time management aids. Those interested in the products can request online a catalogue and a sample kit. Products

and technical support can be provided locally as the company is represented in Australia.



Organized Times

www.organizedtimes.com

Organizing Time has some time management solutions for those who can't get it together on the home front. Take a few pointers from its article "Closet Organising Tips" and you need not face your cupboard with dread again, read "Conquering Kitchen Clutter" and you will find yourself letting go of that Tupperware you have hoarded for years, and let your creative side run wild after you absorb the information in "Crafty Storage Solutions".



Chatrooms & Newsgroups

www.egroups.com/group/coaching

www.topica.com/lists/FirstThingsFirst

Links @ www.netguide.au.com

HOTSPOT



Polo News

polonews.com

A basic homepage belies the wealth of information Polonews offers both the curious and the enthusiast. The site provides quick navigation to a range of different resources including job vacancies, monthly news bulletins, merchandise, and even an online dating service. For those who thought a chukka was something you have after a big night out, there is a large section explaining the basics of the game, and for anyone seeking a professional player for their team, the site lists a database containing numerous international and local players (no, Prince Charles isn't one of them).

Polo Ponies online

www.chukka.com



If you're going to play the game you're going to need a pony, and this is where to find one. The ponies available for

purchase fall into three levels of playing ability: High Goal (15 goals and above), Intermediate (4 to 15 goals), and Low Goal (beginners level). Potential pony buyers are provided with graphics, origin details, and playing histories. Further information on individual horses can easily be obtained and confidentiality is assured. The site also includes a chat forum, a newsletter, a calendar of important Polo events, and links to other horse sites. I must say, Illusion looks a mighty fine pony — how much? Hmm, maybe not.

Belltrees

www.Belltrees.com

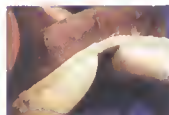
Fancy a game with the landed gentry? Polo has long been a tradition at historic Belltrees station, and is home to the current Australian coach, Anto White. Located near Scone, the horse capital of Australia, and Kerry Packer's prestigious Ellerston Polo Club, Belltrees offers three-day Polo clinics to Low Goal players keen on improving their game. Bed and Breakfast accommodation is available, giving guests the time to unwind and the chance to inspect the Belltrees-bred Polo ponies for sale.



Country Polo

countrypolo.com.au

You've bought the High Goal pony, memorised the game rules, and even

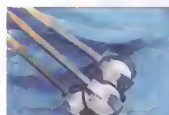


managed to score a game playing for the Bungendore Bouncers, but horror! No equipment! What to do? Luckily, help can quickly be

found through Country Polo — “the finest polo shop on the Net.” Bright bold graphics provide a great preview to what one can buy from the shop including mallets, saddles, helmets, goggles and whips. This is an



Australian site, so all prices are in local currency. However, as there is no online ordering, send your Polo wish list by fax.



Polonet Argentina

www.polonet.com.ar

What style, what grace, what form, what a goal! Argentinean Polo players certainly cut a fine figure on the field, and Polonet Argentina provides some nice action shots to download. The

site also features a very suave looking man called Eduardo giving advice on playing a better game, and an interview with a lucky lad who does nothing but play Polo all over the world.



Bicycle Polo Association of America (BPAA)

www.scescape.net/~bikepolo

Can't afford a pony? How about the cheaper alternative — Bicycle Polo. A combination of cycling, racket games and team play, Bicycle Polo is promoted as a low-impact, fun-filled activity. Enthusiasts claim

the game can be played by anyone from the ages of nine to ninety, and it involves little risk of injury — that is, if you can avoid

crashing your bike. The site features rules of the game (intentional ramming of bikes is an on field no no), and a top ten list of why Bicycle Polo is a better



sport than its equine alternative. And why is it? Because when you break a spoke, you don't have to shoot your bike.

World Elephant Polo Association

elephantpolo.com

For those who are looking for the bigger thrill in Polo playing, why not travel to Nepal to do a spot of Elephant Polo? Founded in 1982, WEPA holds an annual invitational tournament every year at the Tiger Tops Mountain resort in Nepal. As the name suggests Elephant Polo is played on those big beasts, and the teams have the appropriate names — the Screwy Tuskers, British Gurkha Gladiators, and Titanic Tracks — are just a few.

Chatrooms & Newsgroups

polonews.com/forums.html

[www.bravenet.com/forum/](http://www.bravenet.com/forum/show.asp?userum=325331414)

show.asp?userum=325331414

Links @ www.netguide.au.com

CRAFTS

HOTSPOT



Craftsite Australia

www.craftaus.com.au

Craft Australia is the national representative body for the professional craft sector, and focuses on creating a strong identity of craft within Australia's culture and economy. Its funky site showcases the work of talented craft practitioners through an abundance of quality graphics. The site contains a short biography of each artist, as well as an order form to purchase his or her work. Other site features include a list of craft organisations, the latest in craft news, details of upcoming exhibitions, and a chat room where everyone is invited to talk about craft.



Image Dolls

www.imagedolls.com

The creator of Image dolls came up with the concept after a trip away from her kids. Wishing the little tikes were with her, she had the bright idea of making rag dolls and transferring the kids' faces on them. Image dolls do look a little freaky but the site provides plenty of suggestions for buying one, including giving children dolls with images of their parents on them (guaranteed to really terrify them at night), sending a lover a doll with your image on it (you might be waiting a long time for that second date), and getting one for the office (make sure it's your boss so you can stick pins in it).



Community Aid Abroad: Aid through Trade

www.caatrading.org.au

This is your chance to buy unique handicrafts while helping to support an impoverished community abroad. Community Aid Abroad Trading assists developing communities to trade and work. A range of fine handicrafts can be purchased through its site including baskets from Africa, ceramics from Peru and Indonesia, and serpentine and soapstone carvings from India.

GetCrafty

www.getcrafty.com

GetCrafty is a fun site to explore how you can save and be creative at the same time. A must read is an article on "Punk Fui" where the author has adopted the principles of "Feng Shui"



but has decorated her house using purchases from a dollar store. Other cost saving articles include "The Naked Lady Party" (women get together to swap undesirable clothes), and "Knit Your Own Bikini" (knitting being no longer the domain of grannies). Don't forget to check out the site's message board "Glitter" where you can pick up heaps of craft ideas.

The Knappers Corner

www.eskimo.com/~knapper

Flintknapping is the ancient craft of creating stone tools. This site provides an interesting insight to the flintknapper's world and their devotion to making tools, knives, and other projectile points. Modern flintknappers make their tools using several specialised tools including hammerstones, antler billets, pressure flakers, punches, and abraders. Flintknappers get together at events called Knap-ins, and regularly attend survival workshops which are held throughout the US and Canada.

Travel to Oriland

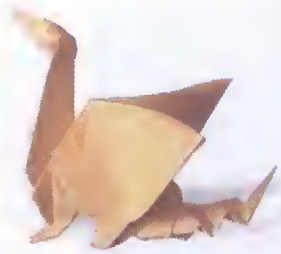
library.thinkquest.org/27152/

Welcome to the Oriland, the land of the little paper people. Created from the craft of Origami, Oriland was invented (and folded) by a pair of Russian artists/

psychologists.

Oriland has seven major cities: Oriville, Foldingburg, Goblington, La Magic, Newfold, Papertown and San-Elf, and is

inhabited by beings such as elves and goblins. There are many wondrous sites to visit in Oriland, and after a leisurely browse why not take part in the Origami Quest, where successful "scouts" can create their own Origami models, and have their names listed on an honour roll.



Arts-n-Crafts

www.inmotion-pcs.com/

amass/theboss/artsn.htm

If "mum I'm bored" is a familiar catch cry in your household, direct the kids to this colourful site. Arts-n-Crafts has a large range of projects to keep little fingers busy for a while. Kids can create some nifty things including coloured sand, spoon puppets, glitter shakers, multicolour binoculars, and invisible ink. The site also lists a range of easy-to-cook recipes that are perfect for pre-schoolers. All instructions are easy to follow, and there are no extravagant craft materials or recipe ingredients to buy.

Chatrooms & Newsgroups

www.craftaus.com.au/discgrp/default.htm

www.topica.com/lists/craftydiver

Links @ www.netguide.au.com

COFFEE

HOTSPOT

Oz Coffee

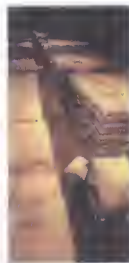
www.ozcoffee.com.au



If you spend the majority of your time huddled over a computer keyboard, you may need a cuppa or two to get your body buzzing. Oz Coffee has created a range of special blends aimed at coffee drinking computer lovers. Blends include "Hackers' Blacker Beans" — for an overdose of caffeine, "Net-Head Smoothie" — a smooth satisfying cup, "Hyper Cyber Slider" — is full-bodied with intense flavour, and "Downloader Dripolater" — a mellow brew. All blends can be purchased online, and if you are having



trouble picking a favourite, Oz Coffee offers a "Beta-Testers Six Pack", which provides samples of each blend.



Coffee Complex

www.coffeecomplex.com.au

"Coffee Complex is a combination of three things — coffee, people and passion." Andrew Gross, "Roast master", and owner of Sydney-based shop Coffee Complex, is so passionate about coffee he's written a philosophy as to why he roasts coffee. After reading it, no more will you look at coffee as a mere beverage. It is so much more. Oh the passion! Oh the joy! This well laid out site does provide some interesting features, especially the "Coffeepedia", which includes the history of coffee making, and the Ten Commandments for brewing the perfect coffee blend.



Barista College of Australia

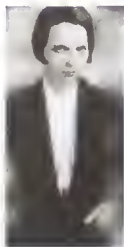
www.baristacollege.com.au

Tired of your job? Looking for something new? Why not study the art of coffee making? Located in Sydney, Barista College trains people to become skilled coffee professionals. The science of coffee making is explored extensively at the college. Studies range from identifying different bean types to extracting the perfect cup of coffee. Upon graduation, students are known as a "Barista", and will be given vocational guidance. The site includes a brief description of the courses available, as well as a form to register your interest in becoming a coffee making extraordinaire.

All Dressed in Black

home.araneum.bc.ca/black2.htm

Coffee lovers discard all colourful clothes at once -



black is the colour to wear if you are a serious coffee drinker. This site provides a short yet compelling history of the black clad coffee drinkers. Black has been the choice colour for nearly 400 years, a tradition starting with the wealthy Dutch merchants in Renaissance times, spanning to the "Beat Generation" of the 50's and 60's, and finally to the "Gothic" music movement of the 70's 80's and 90's.

Caffeine Addict's Quiz

www.dhia.psu.edu/caffeine.htm

A quick quiz to take if you feel you are suffering from caffeine withdrawals. Persistent neglect of your caffeine intake can lead to what this site calls — "Alertness Deficit Disorder (ADD)". Please consume one strong pot of coffee or more if you answer NO to the following questions: "Do you eat spoonfuls of instant coffee because it's easier? Does your coffee cup resemble a beer stein? and Have you ever woken up in a puddle of your own coffee? More in-depth questions can be found on this site, so don't delay in reading them, as ADD can be fatal.

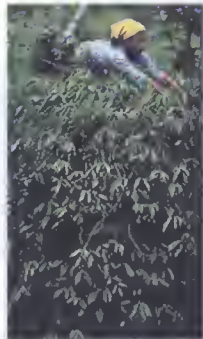


National Geographic's Coffee

www.nationalgeographic.com/coffee

This is the site for students who want to prepare for their appearance on *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire*. Serious facts and figures, maps and legends, geography, history, chemistry, agriculture, and on it

goes. It's like being at an online school for coffee, and you just know the source is impeccable — if *National Geographic* says it's so, it must be correct. And of course, it's presented in that inimitable NG style: beautifully written and designed. Spend some time here and you'll be an expert on coffee faster than you can say "medium mocha macchiato" and actually know what it means.



Coffee Science Source (CSS)

www.coffeescience.org/css.html

Coffee Science Source is the scientific and medical mouthpiece for the National Coffee Association of the United States, so you can be assured of only good news in the latest studies in coffee research. Some CSS findings, which are available on its site, propose that caffeine has little or no bearing on

heart disease, pregnant women can safely drink coffee, breast cancer is not caused by caffeine, and that coffee can actually reduce the risk of gallstones in men by 40%.



Chatrooms & Newsgroups

[alt.coffee](#)

[alt.drugs.caffeine](#)

Links @ www.netguide.au.com

GHOSTS & FAIRIES

HOTSPOT



AGHS — Australian Ghost Hunters Society

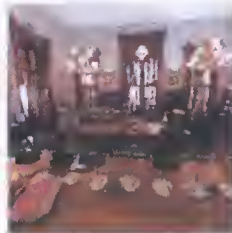
www.aghs.org.au

AGHS was founded by paranormal investigators frustrated by the lack of ghost societies in Australia. Membership is open to all “believing” Australians, and as a member you can take part in some spooky research. Before you join the society, you should be aware of some of its rules and conditions, which include the following: Ask the spirits of the dead for their permission to take the photos (probably unwise to ask them to say cheese), avoid shooting (as in photo) when foreign objects are floating near camera (at this point you’d most likely be running, not taking a photo), and no running or horse play when in cemeteries, and historical sites (so if objects are floating nearby, best depart by walking briskly).

GhostCam

www.courierpress.com/ghost

A site that can entertain the kids for hours by giving them the opportunity to become real life “ghostbusters” in the comfort of their own home.



Williard Library in Evansville, Indiana, installed GhostCam in a reading room, which is supposedly haunted by a mysterious lady in grey. If you think you have spotted the ghost,

it is then an easy process to capture the shot and submit it to the site as evidence of a sighting. Okay, may have lied a teensy bit about it being entertaining stuff, but it was fun to watch a guy cram three books down his trousers and try to smuggle them out of the library.

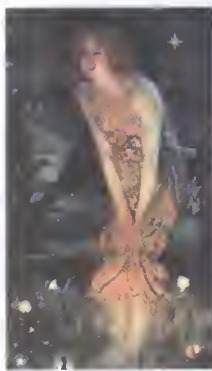
Ghost Hunter UK

fp.ghosthuntersuk.f9.co.uk

While the content of this site is not that much different from its Australian counterpart with its photos of the dead, and tales of supernatural experiences, it does have the added bonus of providing the potential paranormal sleuth with a rundown on the tools of the trade. So, before heading to your local cemetery for a night of ghost hunting, remember to pack the night vision camera, extra sensitive sound amplifier, super sensitive sound recorder, unbelievably sensitive motion recorder, and something very important called an EMF — which is an electromagnetic frequency reader. Where you find these items is another question.

The Enchanted Hollow

www.geocities.com/Paris/Concorde/5412



If you can't find any fairies at the bottom of your garden it's most likely they have flitted away to the Enchanted Hollow. As you listen to the soothing sounds of Enya you can wander through this magical land and meet some of its residents including mermaids, dragons, unicorns & fairies.

Anne Geddes

www.annegeddes.com

This site has the cutest little fairies and angels in cyberspace. Anne Geddes is famous for her creative photographs of babies, and her site is brimming with adorable photos. The pictures can be downloaded onto your own site as long as you adhere to the terms of agreement. The site contains an array of Anne Geddes merchandise including calendars, plush toys, jigsaw puzzles, stickers, and journals. Some nice freebies are here too — a screensaver, desktop picture, and an assortment of e-cards to send to friends and family.



Sarah's Archangels

www.sarahsarchangels.com/index2.html

Ever get that little itch between your shoulder blades which makes you feel like someone is watching you? It could be your Guardian angel keeping tabs on your

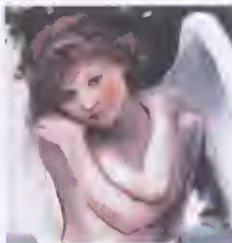
wellbeing. If you are a believer or even just a little curious about these unseen helpers, this site will provide you with an overwhelming supply of angelic information. Features include an A to Z listing of angels, angel visitations, music and poetry, angel wisdom, and angel pictures.



Angelgift.com

thingsfromheaven.com

If you're seeking a few cheeky cherubs or some solemn angels to adorn your Web site, this is the place to go to get some free angel Clip Art. Though



the site's collection is not by any means extensive there are some pretty cute images including angels with little beating wings, and cherubs surrounded by

love hearts. This is the homepage for a Californian gift shop that specialises in angels, and a few of its products are also available to buy online including books, and CDs of inspirational music.

Chatrooms & Newsgroups

www.egroups.com/community/

AusGhostHunters

www.topica.com/lists/horrorclub

Links @ www.netguide.au.com

CONSPIRACY THEORIES

HOT SPOT



The Picasso Conspiracy

web.org.uk/picasso

Unearthed from the remains of a Polish woman's estate, a drawing has caused controversy in the art world as it is claimed by some art boffins to be a previously unknown work by the legendary Pablo Picasso. A fingerprint on the drawing could be the only way of identifying it as a Picasso, and therein lies the mystery — the Picasso Estate want nothing to do with the artwork, and have refused access to fingerprinted items which could prove it is genuine. Got a few Picassos lying around with fingerprints on them by any chance? If so, there is an offer of a \$1,000 reward if you can help authenticate the drawing.

Conspire

www.alchemica.co.uk/cgi-bin/conspire/truth.cgi

A site for the conspiracy theorists who are feeling a little left out because they don't have a theory to call their own. Just fill in the blanks and Conspire will create one for you. A believer of all conspiracy theories myself, Conspire has helped me put my fears into words: "The Prime Minister has been kidnapped by aliens and replaced by an imposter who has undergone extensive plastic surgery. The aliens want to take over the world, and we can only be saved if Leonardo Di Caprio stops making movies."

Bert is Evil

fractalcow.com/bert

Be afraid, be very afraid. Bert is out there and he's not happy. This site exposes one of the most evil minds of our time — Bert from Sesame Street. Featuring shocking interviews with his Sesame Street pals, Kermit the Frog, Elmo, and Ernie, the site also provides evidence that Bert was behind many mysterious events including the JFK assassination, the box office flops of Kevin Costner, and the sudden death of the original Sesame Street storeowner Mr Hooper.





Conspiracy Net

www.conspiracy-net.com

This site is aiming to be the biggest conspiracy site on the Net. Already it has accumulated 610 conspiracies, and is keeping paranoia alive by releasing a new conspiracy every week. Most of the conspiracies featured are weird but there are few that don't seem too far off the mark, such as: "Teletubbies signal the end of the world as we know it." Spend too much time at this site and you may never leave your house again.

Nexus

www.nexusmagazine.com

The homepage for the bi-monthly Australian magazine *Nexus*, which probes into all things strange and spooky including government cover-ups, suppressed science, alternative health remedies, UFOs, and mind-control slavery. If you're not feeling paranoid before you read some of the articles on this site you may be heading that way once you have delved into the conspiracy theories behind polluted pet foods, mad cow disease, the dangers of soy products, fluoride damage, and the calcium deficiency myth.

NEXUS

David Hasselhoff is the Anti-Christ

www.esquilax.com/baywatch

What is it with these theorists? Run out of mileage with the JFK, Roswell, and Death of Marilyn conspiracies that they have to pick on poor Mr



Hasselhoff and the very talented Baywatch lifeguards? Okay, so with a beard and a set of horns David does look a little like the devil — but just think of the good he has done in bringing Baywatch to more than a billion TV screens worldwide.

Star Trek: The 47 Conspiracy

www.ozemail.com.au/~davidml/st-47

A conspiracy for the Trekkies. Next time you're watching an episode from one of Star Trek's stable of shows take note to see if the number 47 appears or is mentioned. Apparently, 47 is the show's most used number. The fixation with 47 in the Star Trek universe can be traced back to one of the Sci-fi series' writers, Joe Menosky, who is a graduate of Pomona College. It seems Pomonians revere the number 47 for its mathematical qualities.

Chatrooms & Newsgroups

www.topica.com/lists/

[Paranoia_Isnt_The_Problem](http://www.conspiracy-net.com/chat.html)

www.conspiracy-net.com/chat.html

Links @ www.netguide.au.com

OZ SITE OF THE MONTH

Tribe

www.tribe.com.au

TRIBE IS A GUIDE extraordinaire, presenting music and movie reviews, fashion, gossip, issues and news from a refreshingly independent perspective. It has a hip flavour with a healthy hint of hedonism.

Choose a city from Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide, Brisbane, Canberra or Perth, and get ready for an onslaught of information and entertainment when you delve deep into Tribe's

tantalizing, intriguing online world. Run your eyes over pages of digital art and fetish fashion, learn about

developments in music and technology, keep up with gay and lesbian events in your city, and check out special

weekly features.

News, editorial opinions, and events at pubs, clubs and theatres, combine to create this site; a pastiche that

is interesting, visually vibrant and informative. Be the first to know about exciting happenings going on around you — above and below ground, night and day — in your city and on your planet, at Tribe. / **SARAH MEAD**



HOMEGROWN

SEND DETAILS TO

editor@netguide.aust.com

**NEW
OZ
SITES**

Health See Your Doctor www.seeyourdoctor.com.au (Sydney)

Lifestyle shopping Spongstore www.spongstore.com (Melbourne)

Counselling CounselNet www.counselnet.com.au (Adelaide)

Teenagers Kidzdom www.kidzdom.com (Melbourne)

Senior citizens Geriantics www.geriantics.com.au (Sydney)

Finding people BeFound www.befound.com.au (Brisbane)

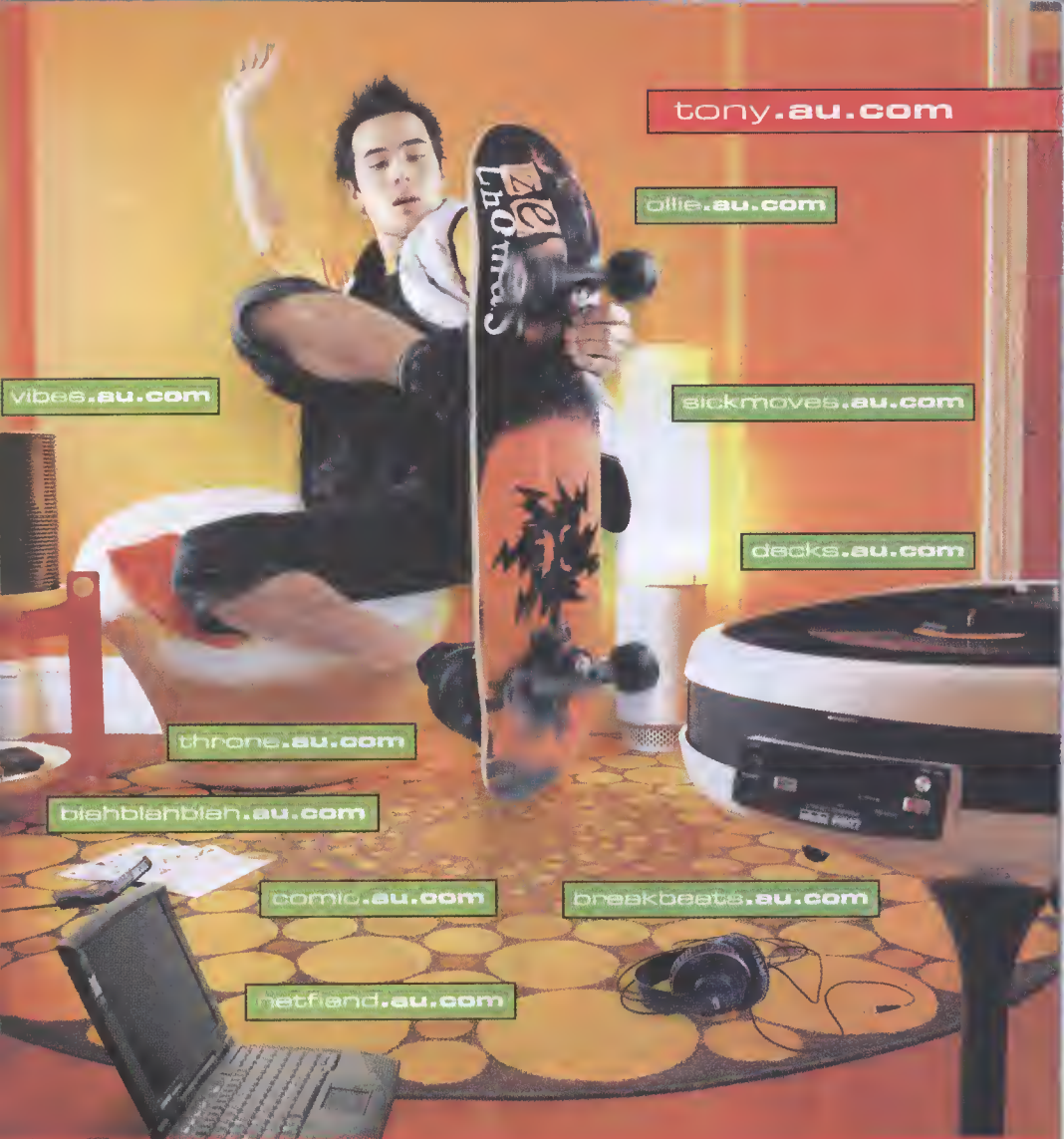
Vinyl to MP3 and CD LP Recorder & LP Ripper www.cfbsoftware.com.au (Adelaide)

Baseball links Australian Baseball Links www.cfbsoftware.com.au/baseball.htm (Adelaide)

Social satire The Bug www.thebug.com.au/default.htm (Brisbane)

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domainerism.au.com /doe'mæn-ər-izm/ *noun* - 1. an uniquely identifiable domain name - enables user to register any name, word, place or thing as their domain name: available only @ www.au.com. 2. habitual characteristics of an individual and/or business, represented online by an unrestricted [au.com](http://www.au.com) domain name. (also - *domainia*, *domainiac*)

create your online identity and launch your future!

register in minutes @

www.au.com

.au FREE CLASSIFIEDS

HotHouse 12312

Stuff
com.au

stuff.com.au, online auctions now with FREE classifieds.

SHOP GUIDE

No excuse needed

Denise Montgomery finds things you don't need an excuse to buy on the Net, except for the fact you can.



Cool as

Sick of your workmates plundering your lunch from the office fridge? Then grab one of these and keep it on your desk. The electronic Cool-It fridge is the perfect place for your sammies and a six-pack. Instead of liquid refrigerant and a noisy motor, it's a quiet plug-in that works electronically. Comes with a 12v car adapter so it's great if you're on the road. The black personal fridge is compact and weighs less than 2kg. It's \$US79.95 from sharperimage.com.

Scoot it

Bored with traffic snarl-ups and need a bit of exercise? Invest in an environmentally friendly Xootr Scooter from Gowings www.gowings.com.au. The deck of the scooter is 9-ply polyurethaned Baltic Birch, the frame is aluminium. BMX style rear brake and non-slip surface on the deck. The 4.8kg scooter can carry a 114kg human, and it all folds up so you can carry it with you. \$499.



Seeing is believing

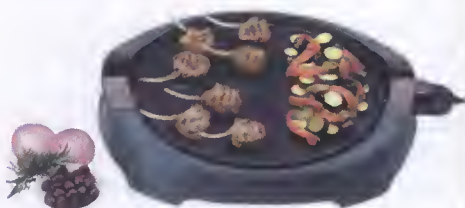
Browse the range of glasses available at www.eyeglasses.com. Around 50 brands from Adidas to Dolce & Gabbana. One cool feature is that you can upload a picture of yourself and then "put the glasses



on" to see how they look. You can order your prescription lenses here, or just frames or sunglasses.

Hot pick

You're stuck inside and dreaming of summer barbecues. Relive those balmy times by firing up the heater, stripping down to your shorts and plonking



one of these Breville Party Grills (\$89) on the table. The non-stick cooking plate (flat or ribbed) has 12 different heats and is ideal for entertaining. You can get it from store.yahoo.com/vox-au/hg14.html

Pack a picnic

No point being miserable inside so tog up and do the picnic thing. This four-person picnic backpack with insulated food storage compartment includes two wine bottle holders, stainless steel cutlery for four, mugs, plates, chopping block and even a tablecloth. \$99.95 from Gowings www.gowings.com.au. ■

GO SHOPPING

Visit us at ninemsn.com.au/shopping



A stopover in Hannover

The 2000 World Expo in Germany prompts
Raewyn White to stay awhile

A HIGH SUMMER VISIT to Hannover, Germany www.expo.hannover.de/english/tourist.htm in August 2000 gives you a unique opportunity to explore the future of humankind at the World Trade Fair, EXPO 2000 www.expo2000.de/english/expo2000_40.html.

The EXPO village is the size of a small town. Display areas, exhibitions and entertainment areas spread throughout the site, presenting more than 200 different visions of the future through pavilion-sized installations, spectacular performances and breathtaking simulations.

The German Pavilion www.deutscher-pavillon.de/en/index4b.html brings the world to you via four Web cams and very large screens. The Norwegian Pavilion www.expo2000.no/english/ features a 15-metre reproduction of the Steinsdalsfossen Waterfall, while the Ethiopian Pavilion etonline.netnation.com/ presents the three-million-year-old skeleton of the hominid "Lucy". Each day a different country is in focus, and national days are



celebrated on a grand scale but in traditional style.

On August 10, percussionists from around the world will gather to mark EXPO's halfway point by drumming all day in a diversity of styles. On the same day, St Laurence's night is celebrated. Shooting stars are most clearly visible at this time — and should be wished upon.

Live performances, music, visual art installations www.expo2000.de/english/programm/



vkindex.html and live theatre happen continuously at the Expo site, with outdoor stages, buskers and street theatre mixed in with themed festivals, formal concerts, and extraordinary sights such as an eyeball-shaped house for humans, rats and pigeons.

Each evening after darkness falls, crowds of as many as 10,000 gather for Flambee — a spectacular multimedia event combining fireworks, flame-throwing, live music, gigantic fountains and walls of water onto which movies are projected.

Outside the Expo

Related events can be found in the city of Hannover. The Sprengel Museum www.sprengel-museum.de/english/SMHframes.html has an international exhibition featuring images by some of the world's luminary photographers. At the main freight depot,



the artist Gerhard Merz www.heimerdoering.de/Projekte/gerhard_merz.htm will erect a pavilion of steel, clear and

best sites

more to see

white glass, illuminated by 10,000 neon lights.

You need at least a week if you want to fully experience EXPO 2000. Luckily, cheap and cheerful accommodation within a radius of up to two hours' travelling time is reasonably plentiful www.expo2000-hotels.com, from the really low-price www.rent-a-room-hannover.de/backpacker.html, to beds in private lodgings www.easyroom.de/englisch/index.html. A one-day or three-day

Hannover Card www.europe-today.com/germany/hcard.html will give you free bus travel and entry to many public places, plus discounts on riverboat trips, and on the tilting lift to the top of the New Town Hall dome.

Olde worlde charm – German style

Hannover is an 850-year-old city packed with tourist attractions www.expo.hannover.de/english/tourist/erlebens.htm including museums, botanical gardens, ancient towers, and engraved stone walls. Through the inner city, a thick red line painted on the ground www.hcc.de/rf/ provides a four kilometre trail that passes all of the main sights and more than a few bars, beer gardens, restaurants and cafes.

If you're interested in wildlife, Hannover Zoo

Hannover Virtual City Tour

www.stadtrundgang.hannover.de/english/expl4/start_e4.htm

Hannover Subway map

pavel.physics.sunysb.edu/RR/transit_maps/hannover.gif

Hannover Region Tourism

www.tourismus.hannover.de/english/index_e.html

Yeti Mount & Mystery

www.yeti-expo2000.com

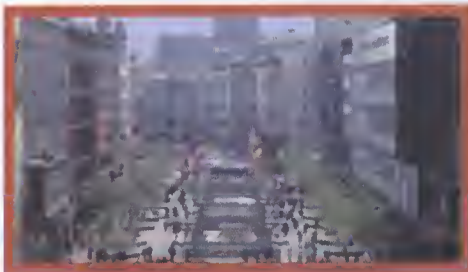
Germany as a travel destination

www.germany-tourism.de

Lonely Planet - Destination Germany

www.lonelyplanet.com/dest/eur/ger.htm

www.zoo-hannover.de/home_e.html presents animals in landscape environments designed to recreate their natural habitats, Serengeti Park www.serengeti-park.com/ presents lions in a grassland environment, and the largest bird park in the world, Walsrode Bird Park www.vogel-park-walsrode.de/englisch/index.htm presents 5000 birds of approximately 850 species from every continent and climatic zone – in ecologically appropriate surroundings. Beyond Hannover city, there are plenty of areas for cycling, hiking, bird watching, golf and riding. The medieval town of Hameln www.europe-today.com/germany/hameln.html, famous for the "Pied Piper" is within an hour's drive, as is Germany's largest lake Steinhuder Meer, ideal for sailing, swimming or just relaxing. ●



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absolutely useful stuff

Free software, guides to help you make great Web pages, tutorials that tell you how to do things you thought might be impossible... this is the place to find the most useful stuff Net users need.

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eBusiness 116

The simple approach is best





shareware

YOUR GUIDE to free & cheap software on the Web

How to find the best Napster servers; catching up on software patches; a funky desktop recording device; a new way to share files; and what every sticky-beak should own — it's all here this month with our resident shareware guru, **Bruce Davis-Goff**.



Cyber Detective Toolkit

★★★★

Platform: **Win 95/98/NT**

Price **\$US19.95 (1.7meg)**

Site **www.cyberdetective.net**

Direct Download **www.cyberdetective.com/download/cdsetup.exe**

The promo for this software arrived in our editor's inbox and he forwarded it to me. I must

admit, I thought it was another email scam, but what a surprise when it turned out to be quite a useful product. As the name implies, it's a bag of tools for the DIY detective and within the program you'll find all you need to become a real sticky-beak.

Take Cyber-Track & Spy for example, an option you can use to create a Cyber-Track & Spy diskette that you can install on

someone else's computer. The secret tracking files from this diskette will record all URLs the user visits. Or maybe you'll like Disk Snoop, a simple utility to search any computer for Internet-related files.

There's also the Investigator's Electronic Notebook for gathering and managing information for investigative related tasks. It has various tools, including built-in area code tracing and also provides an online hookup to the Cyber-Detective's IR Database, which in turn provides access to a variety of publicly accessible information resources.

Apart from listing all the known online directories, the toolkit also provides references to offline ones as well as street maps and military resources. Jam-packed with information, tools and techniques for the serious snoop, although somewhat Ameri-centric.



Essential
Very Good
Good
Fair
Don't Bother



NAPIGATOR

Napigator

☆☆☆☆

Platform: Win 95/98/2000

Price: Freeware (1.67megs)

Site: www.napigator.com

Direct Download

www.napigator.com/

NGATOR113.EXE

By now you must have heard of Napster www.napster.com, the MP3-sharing community that's captured a worldwide following and earned the wrath of Metallica, amongst others.

You may have even heard of Wrapster that extends the functionality of Napster by allowing users to share other

non-MP3 files
notoctavian.
tripod.com.

Now comes Napigator, a utility to help you find the best Napster servers to use. Napigator displays port, network, users, files, gigabytes, and ping times for each server, allowing you to

choose the server that looks the best to you rather than having one automatically assigned. Napster madness shows no sign of abating. Another good resource for all Napster stuff can be found at www.pzcommunications.com/napster/applications/main.htm

FreeBase

☆☆☆☆

Platform: Win 95/98

Price: Freeware (627k)

Site: www.oreality.com

Direct Download

www.oreality.com/

freebase-0.1-15e.exe

In the wake of Napster, the global



MP3 sharing system and Wrapster, which converted Napster into a sharing system for any file, comes FreeBase. The idea is the same. FreeBase creates a virtual private network among users allowing them to share any sort of files — applications, MP3s, movies, music, text and other stuff. It's a simple, single-window affair that seems to work fine and opens up a world of goodies. You should note, as always, that downloading and using certain applications and MP3s may breach copyright laws.

Desktop Dictaphone

☆☆☆☆

Platform: Win/95/98

Price: \$US19.90 (1.2 megs)

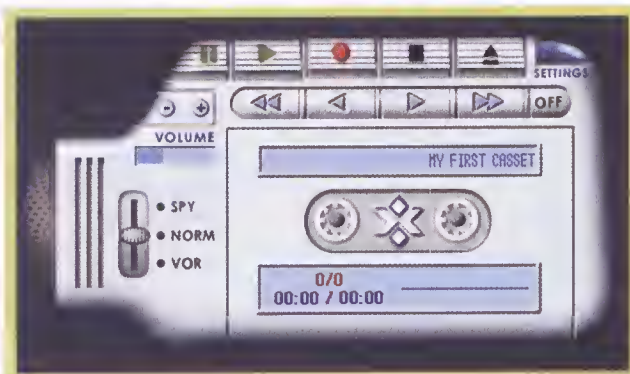
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www.xemico.com/dictaphone/dd.zip

I think I'd like this application just for it's groovy looking interface. Desktop Dictaphone lurks in the system area of your task bar, waiting to spring forth and record any profound utterance you like to make.

It can operate in three modes,

Digital, Analog and Spy. Digital lets you record individual messages, while Analog will record one great long spiel, albeit with stops and starts. Spy mode is voice activated, so anyone lurking at your desk making oo55 calls will be quickly sprung.

Any sound source from your sound card can also be recorded with a maximum

capacity of 10megs. The resulting audio files can be exported to wav format or sent by email either in the Desktop Dictaphone format for other users of the software or in the wav format. Handy for those times when you just need to hear the reassuring sound of your own voice.

CatchUp

Platform Win 95/98/2000

Price Freeware (772k)

Site catchup.cnet.com

Direct Download

catchup.cnet.com/setup.asp

If trying to keep up with the latest patches and upgrades for your system is getting you down, CatchUp may be a big help. Using a service supplied through

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Cnet.com, this smallish software analyses your system and compares what it finds with its online database of upgrades. If anything is outdated, you'll be informed and directed to the best possible remedy. This not only includes software you've installed, but all system components and drivers as well.

CatchUp also looks for security vulnerabilities and I wasn't too impressed when I found 13 holes in my system that could be exploited. Y2K compliance is also checked even though it may seem a little late for that.

Math Maniac

★★★★

Platform **Win 95/98**

Price **Free (1.5 meg)**

Site **www.download.com**

Parental tutoring — on top of all the other labours of love — is not always a strong suit for Mums and Dads, especially in certain areas of education. I'd pick mathematics as one area in which not many of us excel. Help is at hand all over the Web, but we'll speak here about Math Maniac, a new download for primary school children.

"Basic" is the catchword with this one. There are five degrees of difficulty to progress through in the mechanics of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division.

Math Maniac's built-in score card keeps track of correct and incorrect answers to help parents monitor how their students cope with the tasks. It probably won't be lost on most



"tutors" that at the same time your "student" is honing their basic maths skills, their keyboard and computer skills are getting a workout too. ●

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newbies

YOUR GUIDE to email

When most people think of the Internet, they imagine visiting colourful and musical Web sites. But believe it or not, by far the most popular activity on the Net, says **Anna Raciti**, is sending and receiving electronic mail, or email.

WHEN YOU SIGN UP to receive Internet access with an Internet Service Provider (ISP), you'll receive an email address as part of the deal. Your email address is particular to you: think of it like a post office box address in the regular mail system. People who know your email address can send messages to you. In turn, you can send messages to others when you know their email address.

Fast and cheap

One of the best things about email is its speed. When you send an email, your message usually gets delivered to your ISP's mail server. From there it's sent by various routes to the server that hosts your recipient's email service (typically the recipient's ISP).

The message usually takes a few seconds or minutes — sometimes hours — to make its journey, depending on the route the email has had to take and

the congestion it encounters along the way.

If your recipient has a permanent connection to the Internet (common in many businesses today) your message should appear on their email programs almost as soon as their mail servers receive it. Otherwise, your message will arrive next time your recipient logs onto the Net and checks their mail.

Another great thing about email is that it's cheap. It makes no difference whether you're sending an email to your next door neighbour or to a relative overseas, emails are tiny in size, and they take very little time to send and receive. You pay only

for the time you spend connected to your ISP.

Browser-based email

To send and receive email from your computer you will also need an email program — software that helps you format, compose and organise your correspondence. Popular browsers such as Netscape Communicator and Microsoft's Internet Explorer include an email program with other Internet tools. These and other email programs perform the same basic tasks. They collect email from the server, they warn you when you have new mail, they store your emails for future reference, and they act like a





mini-word processor, helping you layout your email just the way you want it.

Of course, if you buy a dedicated email program such as Eudora Pro, Pegasus Mail, or Microsoft Outlook you get more than just the basic features of the free email packages.

Most emails consist of text only, but if you want to send an image or any other kind of file along with your email, you can. The program "attaches" the file to the email. When you receive an email with an attachment, you can view it with the associated program.

For example, if you're sent a .doc (document) file with your email, double clicking on the attachment will open Microsoft Word. Double clicking on a .jpg image will open the program you use to view pictures. Some email packages even allow you to compose and receive distinctive looking emails that include pictures and non-standard fonts.

Free Web-based email services

Today, most people can easily obtain more than one email address. There are many free email services available, and many Web sites also offer free email addresses as a way of getting you to visit the site often. Most of these free email accounts work in a slightly different way to regular email accounts, requiring you to check your email by logging onto a Web site.

To set up an account with a free email service you must visit the service's site, and register. Free email services include Hotmail www.hotmail.com, Start.com.au

www.start.com.au, iName www.iname.com, and Mail.com www.mail.com.

To read your email on Hotmail, for example, you must log onto www.hotmail.com and enter your username and password. Next, you're taken to a screen where you can access your new emails or compose emails to send. Most free email services make money by displaying advertisements or by

selling their databases of email addresses to third parties.

Like regular mail, your email account is susceptible to junk mail — also referred to as spam. You'll find that junk mail can be a result of companies selling your email address to other companies when you sign up to newsletters, product registrations, newsgroups or other services where you must include your email address.

If you want to minimise the amount of unwanted email you receive, only give your email address to reputable companies, or those with sound privacy policies. ■



NEXT MONTH

Email through Internet Explorer and Netscape Navigator



helpdesk

YOUR GUIDE to Internet troubleshooting

If **Vikki Bland** can't find the answer then you're really in trouble. She's at **helpdesk@netguide.aust.com**

Auto update

I have just downloaded Office 2000 and Microsoft Outlook Express 2000. Can I remove/uninstall Outlook Express from Windows 98 since I don't want to use it now I have 2000?

It should have already updated the program. If not, then remove through Add/Remove programs in the Control Panel.

computers). This will tell you your connection speed. If the connection is very slow (eg anything under 25Kpbs), you can consider talking to your telecommunications provider about a new line or you can hang up and try again.

Manual job required
In your May issue on the tutorial

page there was an article that featured a program download called Clean And Tidy. I thought this would be just ideal for my badly overloaded system. However I am still running Windows 3.1 and at the completion of the download of Clean And Tidy it said that the program would not run. Is this because I am still on Windows 3.1 and, if so, is there a similar program that would suit?

As Windows 3.1 does not have a registry, the Clean And Tidy application will not work with it. To clean up in Windows 3.1 you must edit the Win and System ini files and delete folders.

Slow mover

My PC is a nine-month-old Hewlett Packard M50 4411, and it's really slow when surfing the Net. It has a 32MB SDRAM memory. Any suggestions to improve its performance would be appreciated.

Poor surfing performance is usually due to slow connection speed due to a slow phone line or a lowly spec'd modem. If your modem is 33.6Kbps or more, then you may have a "slow line". To check the speed at which you are surfing, click on the icon at the bottom right-hand corner of the task bar (the one with two linked

Reader Tip: Just tweak it

Recently, we said the Network Neighbourhood icon in Windows could not be removed. Since then, lots of people have written to tell us that while the icon cannot be removed, it can be hidden: Even though it's part of Windows, it's possible to hide the Network Neighbourhood icon. Tweak UI is a small program that enables you to modify parts of Windows that are not usually modifiable. It doesn't remove Network Neighbourhood, but hides the desktop icon so it doesn't get in the way. This can be done by downloading and installing the program available from **thepage-123.8m.com/tweak.html** From there you go to the desktop tab and uncheck the box next to Network Neighbourhood and the icon will then be hidden from view. / **GRAEME DOE**

Illegal operations

Every time I use Internet Explorer for surfing the Net it shows me this after 10 minutes of being online: *!Explorer This program has performed an illegal operation and will be shut down. If the problem persists, contact the program vendor. Details>>*

!Explorer: caused an invalid page fault in module MSHTML.DLL at 0137:63613eb6. Registers:

EAX=00000000 CS=0137

EIP=63613eb6 EFLGS=00010202

(and a load of other stuff)

Why does it do this and how can I stop it from happening?

These error messages may be intermittent and are generally associated with using High Color (16-bit) or True Color (24-bit) color depths. This behaviour can occur when you are using an older third-party display driver. To resolve this problem, use the appropriate method(s):

Method 1: Contact the manufacturer of your display adapter about obtaining a possible driver update that works correctly with Windows 95.

Method 2: Reduce the Colour Palette setting in Display properties to 256 Colour, using the following steps: Click Start, point to Settings, and then click Control Panel.

Question of the Month

And the password is...

Dear help desk,

My computer is continually coming up with the error message "MPrexe caused an invalid page fault in module mdrserv.dll" when I try to open most programs. The computer then freezes completely. This is a new problem, but it has me beaten.

This may be because a password list (PWL) file is corrupt. To try to fix it, proceed as follows: Locate and delete or rename your PWL file. The file is named username.pwl, where username is the name you use to log on to the computer. It is located in the Windows folder. After you delete or rename the file, restart Windows.

Double-click Display. Click the Settings tab. In the Color Palette box, click 256 Color. Click OK. Restart your computer when you are prompted to do so.

Major export

How do I export the registry when I want to?

You should always export your registry before editing it because if you make a mistake and corrupt it, it takes fairly advanced PC skills to

fix it. If you've exported it before you start, then you can just import it again. To do this:

1. Run up Regedit
2. Click Registry/Export Registry File then in the "Save in" box find your C: drive and pick a directory name you can remember. Next, in the "File Name" box, give the export a name you will remember (e.g. exportreg) then click the All button in the Range box and click on ok. ■

While every care is taken with the answers, the publishers cannot be held responsible for the accuracy of the information given or any consequences arising from it.



tutorial

YOUR GUIDE to mailing lists

People have been using mailing lists since the mids 70s to converse with other like-minded souls about their favourite topics. **Tim Marshall** offers some suggestions on how to get involved, how to set up your own list, and eventually, how to look and sound like a pro.

ONE OF THE FEATURES of the Internet is its ability to create and support communities of people with similar interests, goals and motives. Free mailing lists have for many years been a driving force behind this aspect of the Internet.

There are literally thousands of electronic discussion groups in cyberland canvassing everything from rock collecting and frogs to more serious issues like drug abuse. The concept has to this day provided a great platform for discussions, social contact and access to specific information.

An Internet mailing list can not only help maintain a worldwide community but also help promote your Web site and keep users coming back. Experts say that the most valuable commodities of the Web are user information and a database of contacts. Indeed, if you know who your users are you can create better content and target specific users. Also, if you have a list of people who use your site you

can keep them informed of new developments, special offers, or events in the offline world.

What's available?

There is a range of list services available and it's just as easy to create your own, as it is to jump



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onto one belonging to someone else. If you want to check out the kind of lists available (and see the sheer volume) there's a site called List Universe www.list-universe.com where you'll find literally thousands of different lists covering every topic imaginable.

Most list providers and servers allow you to generate your own list and create a discussion group around whatever topic takes your fancy. You can add a form to your Web site and keep people in the picture with your latest news or you can maintain connections with old school friends and link them with others around the world. The possibilities are endless.

My friend recently launched a Web site for his band www.bdussy.com and added a simple form to the homepage to capture user information and create a list of

fans. He has since amassed a hefty bag of contacts and uses the list for marketing purposes and to create a community of people around the



band. Adding the form was really simple — he found the first one by searching resource links pages www.freewebmastertools.com but with a little HTML practice, he eventually created his own.

How to set up a mailing list

There are two ways to set up your mailing list.

One way to get a list started is to provide a simple form and button on your Web site, which

WHAT IS A MAILING LIST?

Internet mailing lists are (usually) just communities of people sitting around discussing one of their favorite topics via email. For example, fans of Spanish cooking can join any number of lists on this particular topic, meet other devotees, and talk about their experiences and opinions. The mailing list format lends itself to calm, thoughtful, literate, mature discussion, where relationships between the list members actually grow and deepen over an extended period of time. Most Internet experts say the mailing list format is the most civilized type of online community.

will direct people's email addresses to your specified address. From here you can manually add addresses to your list, whether it's housed on a list server or on your PC.

Another way sees people's details and email addresses automatically added to your list through a list server. Simply set up a new account with the server and you have a list ready to go.

ListBot www.listbot.com is one of the best list free list server sites and offers a variety of forms you can add to your Web site to collect user information. These include a simple, ListBot-branded button where users enter their email address and submit to be automatically included on your list. ListBot allows you to collect valuable demographic information on your users, including age, occupation, etc. It also offers Web-based list management and messages of up to 100Mb (around 15,000 words).

There are a number of other list servers available. Some are free and, like ListBot, add a



LIST PROVIDERS

Sites that provide directories of Internet discussion groups: mailing lists, newsgroups, and IRC chat channels. It's the quickest way to find groups of people on the Net discussing your area of interest.

ListBot www.listbot.com

eGroups www.egroups.com

VP Mail www.list.to

Liszt www.liszt.com

Coollist www.coollist.com

MessageBot www.messagebot.com

eCircles www.ecircles.com

The Globe www.theglobe.com

Milo www.milomail.com

Topica www.topica.com

Eurofreebies

www.eurofreebies.com/maillist

couple of lines of advertising to the top or bottom of your messages, while others charge a fee. Commercial servers, including Dundee.net, www.dundee.net/isp/email.htm are useful when your publication or list size has outgrown a free service (maybe your messages are too big or you need to customise your subscription form) and you require a more flexible and professional software package for your mail.

Other freebies

eGroups www.egroups.com is a service which hosts lists (either moderated or un-moderated) and provides features such as unlimited subscriber numbers and file storage space. eGroups, like most list servers in general, is great for discussion groups, networking, event coordination (reunions

or conferences), business newsletters and more. Using eGroups, you can set up a list with all members able to participate in the discussion using the one address (eg mylist@egroups.com).

A new user, or someone added to the list by a moderator, must register at the eGroups Web site before receiving messages and having access to other eGroups facilities, including photo and file archives (20Mb per group), calendars, private chat rooms and polls. You can receive individual messages posted to the list or a consolidated digest of the day's correspondence. To give an idea of the size of the lists market out there, eGroups says it currently serves more than 13

million members and hosts more than 280,000 diverse and active email groups exchanging 1.5 billion emails per month.



Another free list server is VP Mail www.list.to, an Australian service providing list serving for individuals, groups and businesses. Others include Coollist www.coollist.com, MessageBot www.messagebot.com and Eurofreebies Maillist www.eurofreebies.com/maillist.

VP Mail has a registry of lists you can join and facilities with which to start your own list. It distributes contributions to list members, much the same as ListBot. VP Mail also aims to offer a range of enhanced services and functions including moderation, email commands, multi-lingual lists, digests, archives, encryption and



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VP Mail

security, payment options, advertising supported lists, and private lists. It also provides a step-by-step interface for managing email discussions, subscribing to different groups and finding out more about email groups in general.

Eurofreebies offers free hosted lists for text or HTML newsletters and updates. The site provides HTML code to add a subscription box to your Web site and a Web-based control panel where you can manage your list. Other features include the ability to search members, generate statistics, archive messages and sign-up options ensuring only those who want to be on the list make it there.

Adding subscription

As my guitar-playing friend found, adding a subscription or sign-up box on your Web site is simple. Most list servers offer HTML script to copy and paste wherever you want on your site using your Web

editing program. To begin, sign-up with a list server. The server will issue you with a username and password and give you access to site owner resources including HTML code. Because you have signed in, the server knows the name and location of your list and customises the HTML accordingly.

You don't have to rely on people signing up for your list and most list servers provide a feature for inviting new people to join. Using ListBot, you simply add your prospective members' email addresses to a new list and attach an invitation for them to sign-up for your mail-outs. It's important to remember protocol when using lists and that mass, unsolicited

emails are not acceptable. When you send out your invitations, only add those who reply and always remove people from your list on their first request.

You have a number of choices as to how you run your list. Some lists are like an announcement list



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MAILING LIST ETIQUETTE

The List Member's Netiquette Bible www.ist-etiquette.com

SOME DOS AND DON'TS FROM NETGUIDE

- Observe the character of a list before joining
- Never forget that the person on the other side is human.
- Never assume a person is speaking for their organization.
- Be careful what you say about others.
- Be brief.
- Use correct spelling and grammar
- Use text only: no attachments
- Stick to the list topic
- Think about your audience.
- Be careful with humor and sarcasm.
- Only post a message once.
- Don't repeat what has already been said.
- Check your return email address and expect responses.
- Be careful about copyrights and licenses.
- Cite appropriate references.
- Don't overdo signatures.
- Don't use lists as an advertising medium.
- Avoid posting to multiple lists.

and provide newsletters or advertise products to readers. Triple J www.abc.net.au/triplej offers a good example of a read-only list and keeps members informed of radio station news and upcoming events.

Moderated lists allow members to add their own messages but give the list owner control over the content of the messages. Messages are stored with the list server until the list owner has approved them.

If you want everyone on your list to be able to post messages and interact in their own time, a discussion list is perfect. This type of list allows a

posted message to be sent immediately to the list of recipients. It's an effective way to conduct online discussions and is useful for trouble shooting or getting quick tips back from other members.

While there are some unscrupulous operators out there who insist on filling your mailbox with rubbish, there's good to be had using Internet mail services. There's nothing difficult about setting up a list and there's no doubt they provide a great link between people online and endless interesting information. Perhaps the online world is just waiting for you to start one.



Cut to the Chase.

car sale
classifieds
finance
insurance
news
reviews

www.car.net.au



How a mailing list called Homespun Health treated its members



Michael Jamieson and Penelope Findlay spent most of the past six years working in San Francisco (she as a Web designer, he as a doctor.) In early 1997, they struck on the idea of combining their professional talents to each extend their knowledge of the other's area of expertise.

They started a mailing list. They wanted to test the Internet as a collector of practical health knowledge and a way to distribute health advice, moderated by Michael and some health professional associates. Now, Penelope says they were never prepared for the popularity of such a mailing list.

"We were swamped with postings," she says. "And I mean swamped. People were contributing to the list at a rate of about 1,000 emails a day at its peak, and it was never less than 200. We had no idea a mailing list about common every-day ailments and how to treat them yourself could be so popular."

Michael said the vast majority of the emails comprised homespun style remedies "like grandma would use" for complaints like backaches, colds and flus, tinea, headaches, skin rashes, infections, and even broken bones.

"How you can self-treat a broken bone is beyond me but I remember we had about a dozen postings on that

one from the type of guys — and one woman — who were into those hermit type lifestyles of living in the mountains alone and having to take care of themselves.

"One guy provided a step-by-step guide to fixing a broken arm using what you might find in a bloody tool box and any ordinary kitchen!"

Michael and Penelope managed their list, Homespun Health, for about two years. ■

"One guy provided a step-by-step guide to fixing a broken arm using what you might find in a bloody tool box..."

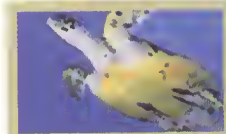


more useful sites

YOUR GUIDE to useful stuff on the Web

Bluemanna

www.bluemanna.com.au



If you have ever wondered what it would be like to hang around in a cage surrounded by three-metre Great White

sharks, ride through the Himalayas on an Enfield motorbike, or bait your hook with two of Australia's best-known fishing writers, this is the site for you.

Wealth Check

www.themoneyshop.com.au

Ever wanted to know how well you rate in terms of wealth but were too afraid to find out? Log onto this site and complete the interactive wealth



questionnaire that rates your income and spending habits against the average in Australia.

How Stuff Works

www.howstuffworks.com

Created by a man called Marshall Brain (of course) a former university professor, this site has walked away with numerous best of the Web awards, including the recent "Coolest Site of the Year" from the Cool Site of the Day Awards show in New



York. Brain adds a new article to the collection every week, and answers one user submitted question every day.

Yourmobile

www.yourmobile.com

The place to go to download the music you want as a mobile phone ring. A huge selection of dance, hip-hop, jazz, classical, rock, you name it. Also a list of the site's current 25 most popular downloads. You'll never guess the favourite.



The Human Race

www.human-race.org

An Adelaide developed health, physical education and sports programme for schools, believed to be a world first. It can be used by schools anywhere in the world, and has already attracted many participants from Australia, Britain, Ireland and the US. It focuses on the relationship between physical activity, food and health.



Start-up Failure

www.startupfailure.com

The website to help individuals trying to cope with failed dotcom business ventures. Visit the website and share your frustrations on the discussion board and request a feedback. Go to the coaching page if you feel "stuck" and not sure what to do next. The site's motto: "True failure lies in never trying again." ■

Send only your BEST suggestions for our team's expert appraisal to editor@netguide.aust.com



webdesign

YOUR GUIDE to designing effective web pages

Paul Tuckey takes us on a step by step of how to make icons for use with Internet Explorer using software called Fireworks. He also introduces us to "blogging".

IF YOU USE INTERNET Explorer and you bookmark sites regularly you will have no doubt seen how some sites come up with icons next to their names in your favourites list. This is a handy feature even if it's used only to help the eye quickly identify the favourite you're after.

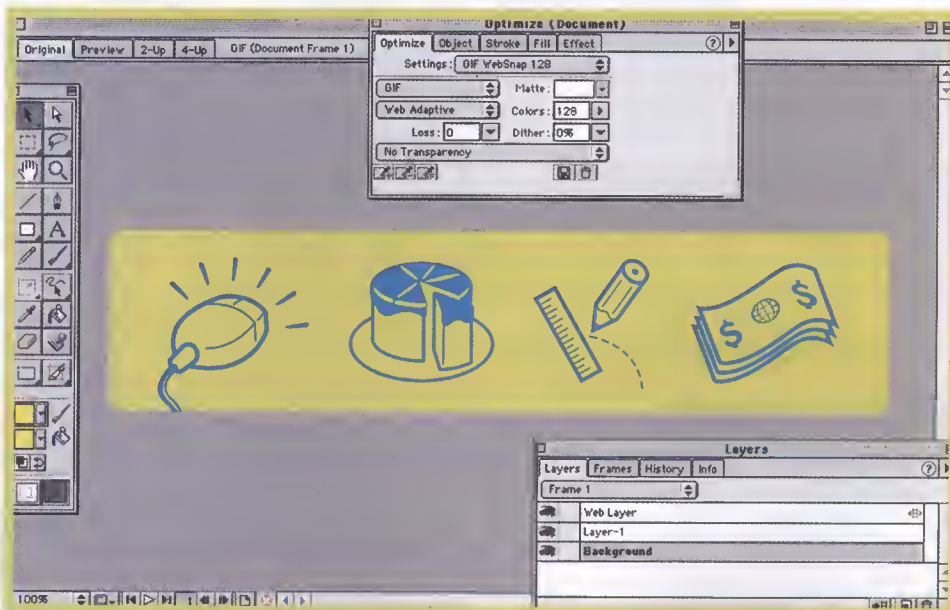
These icons are easy to make. You can do them with most software programs like Paint Shop Pro or Photoshop or, you can do them with Fireworks. Here's how.

Lighting the fuse

The first task is to create a new image that is 16 x 16 pixels. It's a good idea at this point to really zoom in on the new document so you can see what you're doing.

Next, in the swatches palette, change the swatch to "Windows System". This is because icons only support the 256 specific colours that are compatible with older 256 colour video cards.

The next job is the easy bit. Using the colours in



the swatch, draw what you want to appear in your icon. It's a sound idea to base this icon on something simple. Using one letter is a good idea, or maybe a simple symbol.

Once you've done this, you need to export the image as a bmp file. To do this, go to the export tool palette and choose BMP 24 as the export type. Then, export the image and call it "favicon.bmp". Now, rename this exported image to "favicon.ico" and you've created the icon.

Transfer the created icon to your website as you would a normal image then add the favicon Meta tag to your homepage. This should look something like the tag below, but www.netguide.au.com should be replaced with the URL of your site.

```
<link rel="shortcut icon" href="
http://www.netguide.au.com /favicon.ico">
```

Note, this tag should go somewhere between your head tag and your /head tags.

If you want more information search for "favicon" on <http://msdn.microsoft.com>



Blog you!

The Internet has produced it's share of buzz words and phrases in its time: push, portal, B2B and more recently, "blog". Blog, you say?

Blog is a word that sprung into my vocabulary recently. A blog is better defined as a Web log. A blogger is a person who maintains a Web log using Blogger blogger.com, which sprung from a company called Pyra www.pyra.com. Pyra make project management software.

Fair Dinkum! Your cheque is in the mail.

Join EmailCash now & earn rewards online at www.emailcash.com.au



A Web log is basically just as the name suggests: a Web based log. It's a collection of the thoughts, ideas, links and discoveries that you may have made about whatever you're

into. You could also call a log a cut-down public version of a normal diary to which Web nuts around the world publish their ideas, rants and achievements.

The question as to whether Web logs are journalism or art seems to be hotly contested. Personally, I think Web logs are neither. They're simply a new way to publish one's thoughts. Generally, what separates the two is the way in which material is written. Art is supposed to entertain or be a

creative outlet for the author, and journalism is supposed to inform and educate its readers. A Web log can be both.

The introduction on blogger.com says:

"Blogger offers you instant communication power by letting you post your thoughts to the Web whenever the urge strikes."

Well, I'm not usually one to quote (or even believe) marketing speak, but this is basically what Blogger lets you do. You just sign up with an account and give Blogger the ftp details for your site and a few other details and you are Blogging.



You can do custom things like setup templates for your blog so it looks pretty.

It's difficult to fully explain the idea of why

orientation oceania

A guide to the Internet in Australia, South Pacific and beyond

oc.orientation.com



Blogging is useful. It's probably best if you just have a look at some blogs in action. Luckily, I've done the work of

browsing the Web for hours finding the best ones. Here's a few of the great blogs out there:

www.looby.lu.com
www.saturn.org
www.dack.com
www.powazek.com

The only thing I'm wondering is how Blogger makes money? They don't seem to advertise, and they don't seem to be sponsored by any large backers, but they still survive and offer a useful service to Web users.

By the way, anyone reading this with a Web log on their site, please let me know at paul@tuckey.org as I'm interested in seeing some local efforts. ■

Interesting things you can add to your personal (or business) site:

imood.com

Display your current mood on your site easily with Mood.

tools.arsdigita.com/voxpopuli

Add online polls to your website.

www.groksoup.com

Add news or discussion to your site in about five minutes

www.backflip.com

Share your favourite bookmarks with everyone and manage your current favourites.

www.mycomputer.com

Tools, tools, and more tools to help make your site better.

 emailcash

Over 100,000*

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earn rewards online at
www.emailcash.com.au

* Membership is 116,320 as of 16th June 2000



ebusiness

YOUR GUIDE to online business

Are you moving deckchairs on your own Titanic?

It may be an industry cliché that Australian e-commerce builders are only focused on the front end of their online business, but like all clichés, says **Bill Bennett**, it contains a grain of truth.

PAUL KOFFLER, AN ECOMMERCE

analyst with APT Strategies www.aptstrategies.com, says dotcom companies have a tendency to spend a disproportionate amount of their resources creating an attractive-looking Web site and don't spend enough effort on the back-end.

There's logic, of sorts, behind this. Online business is in its infancy. Most e-commerce operations are still in their customer acquisition phase. Drumming up business is clearly a marketing function. Therefore, many Australian e-commerce operations are marketing driven. They emphasise advertising, promotion and selling.

However, successful ecommerce sites are like icebergs — nine-tenths lies out of sight. As the captain of the ill-fated Titanic discovered to his cost, the important part is the bit you don't see. In an e-commerce site, the

bits you don't see are what really differentiate one vendor from another as opposed to what apparently differentiates vendors.

You might only run a modest e-commerce site, but it's useful to look at how the "bit you don't see" works for more swept-up operations. The truth is that for a successful, working e-commerce business the glossy front-end should only be one of the many tightly integrated components.

Substance & style

There are many retail experts who believe gloss is the least important

component. Let's face it, Amazon.com is often held up as an example of successful e-commerce, but it ain't pretty.

More to the point, it's no good showing the world what you want to sell if you can't complete the transaction. The lesson of the dotcom share bubble was that online businesses which don't quickly make the transition from customer acquisition to customer satisfaction are doomed to failure.

A study by the Boston Consulting Group www.bcg.com



found that it costs American e-commerce vendors US\$82 to acquire a single customer. Australian companies are spending similar sums. The only way that kind of investment can be recovered is if the customer spends money, is satisfied, and comes back again and again. A pretty front end might just bring customers back for a second look. An effective back-end will satisfy their needs and bring them back in money spending mode.

In the time-honoured tradition of "re-arranging the deckchairs on the Titanic", floundering e-businesses tend to go through frantic front-end redesigns and crank up their marketing spend when things go wrong. There's often a feeling that acquiring more customers can repair

matters. In fact, a more sensible response to problems would be to fine tune the back-end.

The vital components

A successful online retailer needs three equally important industrial strength components:

Front-end: This is the bit customers get to see. In general, a front-end is an interactive catalogue where customers can browse goods and, if interested, get more details on specific products. Typically, front ends are active pages linked to databases. You can think of this as the Internet equivalent of a showroom or shop floor. Although there's a temptation to build beautiful or attractive front-ends, practical considerations should always take precedence.

Payment or transaction system: This comes into play once a customer decides to make a purchase. Payment systems typically incorporate sub-components like electronic "shopping trolleys", security features and online transaction processing. Electronic payment systems perform the same function as cash registers, point-of-sale terminals and checkouts. Most e-commerce vendors build transaction systems using off-the-shelf components from specialist developers. The task here is to integrate the various transaction technologies with each other and with the front and back end systems.

Fulfilment: Where the online retailer delivers the purchased products and deals with after sales

Surfing? the net



Australian Families Guide to the Internet

Helps parents guide children to a rewarding, productive and safe experience on the Internet. Go to: www.aba.gov.au/family

Online-hotline for complaints about Internet content

If you want to make a complaint about illegal or offensive Internet content, go to the Australian Broadcasting Authority's online-hotline: www.aba.gov.au/what/online/complaints.htm

For copies of a printed brochure about the Guide, or for more information about making a complaint, call the ABA on 1800 226 667



issues. This is actually the hardest part to implement of an e-commerce project, so we'll examine this in more depth.

Fulfilment processes start as the customer browses the front-end. Typically, a front-end should contain links to the inventory database so that customers are informed whether an item is in stock, or, if it isn't in stock, how long it will take for the item to be restocked. Customers like to be kept informed of availability, so you might want to make this information really obvious. For example, the Harris Technology site www.ht.com.au shows product stock levels in its online catalogue and gives details of delivery times for out of stock items. A fulfilment system should also have links to the front end that informs customers of

their delivery options and allows them to track order progress.

Warehousing is an important part of e-fulfilment. Some small e-commerce vendors might hold stock in a lock-up garage or even a physical bricks and mortar shop, but on the whole, goods sold online are kept in warehouses. Large or specialist e-commerce vendors often operate their own warehouses, but these days this function is often outsourced. Depending on the nature of the product on sale, a warehouse can be

centralised or decentralised.

For many Australians e-commerce vendors the physical delivery system is the fly in the fulfilment ointment. Despite our geography, Australian delivery systems are quite unsophisticated — partly because blue-collar working practices established in the 1950s haven't been updated, but also because courier and delivery firms are dancing to the music of a different era. Organising on-demand delivery isn't exactly rocket science — pizza companies have managed it for years.



We haven't quite caught up with New York or London where delivery is 24 hours a day — but we're getting there."

NEXT DAY DELIVERY ON SELECTED ITEMS

Champagne

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Accessories

Red Wine

White Wine

Spirits

Party Packs

Soft Drinks



www.bottleshop.com.au

CORPORATE ACCOUNTS AVAILABLE - 1300 306 618

It's getting better all the time

However, things are changing rapidly. Two years ago you'd be hard pressed to get anything other than a super supreme and garlic bread delivered after 4pm on a weekday. Today, there are couriers who work late into the evening and through the weekend. We haven't quite caught up with New York or London where e-commerce companies can promise delivery within the hour, 24 hours a day, but we're getting there.

Most Australian e-commerce companies outsource delivery, though some, for example, Greengrocer.com, have developed specialist in-house van fleets. This allows them to have greater control over delivery. Typically, shoppers can specify a window of one or two

hours when they'll be home to take delivery.

The last two components of e-fulfilment are customer service and a returns policy where wrongly delivered or faulty goods can be returned for a refund. Many companies rely on email for customer service — this is fine if they run things properly but too often pleas for help go unheeded for too long. Increasingly, e-commerce vendors are offering phone support so customers can get instant, or almost instant, attention. Often this is outsourced to a call centre.

Dealing with returns is one of the big traps in any retail operation. It's not just that vendors need to budget the cost of replacing faulty goods into their price structure. The cost overhead of dealing with a

return can sometimes wipe out all profit on a sale.

The good news for small e-commerce vendors is that a new breed of fulfilment specialists are emerging that can handle the whole fulfilment sequence from the front-end through to dealing with customer enquiries and returns. If you're pondering an entry into e-commerce and you operate in already crowded market, you might consider forming a niche fulfilment operation instead of an online storefront. ■

**eBusiness sites
visited this month**

Workz.com

www.workz.com

Commerce Net

www.commerce.net

Ecommerce Times

www.ecommercetimes.com

WANT A CAREER?

IT'S HERE



For Management, Professional and Technical positions
www.topjobs.com.au

Let him without e-sin cast the first stone

ON THE INTERNET YOU can think, you can seek, you can make friends, you can desire, you can fall in love. And you can commit adultery.

So it was deemed in Italy recently when a Catholic priest, writing in the country's largest-circulation weekly newsmagazine, advised a married woman that by meeting, chatting and flirting with a man on the Internet she had actually committed adultery. Well, cyber-adultery to be precise. But as any good Catholic will tell you, to "think" the sin is to commit the sin.

The priest recalled Christ's phrase in the Bible that if a man looks at a woman with lust he has already committed "adultery in his heart."

The splash of media in Italy and Europe that resulted from this episode included a poll that claimed 40 percent of Italian women interviewed said they feared their husbands might find a woman more fascinating than them while surfing the Web. Which is pretty much what happened to Mike.

Your infidelity is busted

Mike had only been married four years when he started to become suspicious that his wife was up to no good on the Internet. She was always on the computer, some days until 3am. When he asked her what she was doing, she'd fudge an excuse about "research."

Mike suspected his wife was up to

more than "research", so when his co-worker started a business called Infidelity Busters

www.infidelitybusters.com to catch cyber-cheats, Mike took a deep breath and signed up. Eighty dollars and about a month later, Mike had his worst fears confirmed: his wife had responded enthusiastically to chat-room propositions from an infidelity buster, a 25-year-old woman posing as a cyber-suave Casanova. Even though the "affair" didn't take place in the physical world, Mike was convinced his wife had been unfaithful to him. He divorced her.

The woman who launched Infidelity Busters in Chicago claims to have a thriving business. But she may not yet know that there are forces working against her. Well-resourced and savvy forces that could easily foil her infidelity busters from their stated missions.

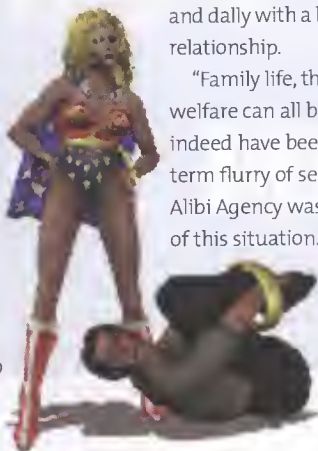
The infidels fight back

An enterprising British company recently launched Alibi Agency **www.alibi.co.uk**, an Internet-based agency that arranges alibis for people willing to pay for them. Just take a look at the company's spiel:

"With the pressures of modern life, many of us have occasion to stray from our long term partners and dally with a brief sexual or emotional relationship.

"Family life, the home, business and children's welfare can all be put on the line for what may indeed have been a totally inconsequential short term flurry of sexual or emotional feelings. The Alibi Agency was established to provide a way out of this situation. We offer a service which can help

to protect your loved ones from undue anxiety, and help to ensure the stability of a long term relationship and financial





IS THERE A DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A REAL AFFAIR AND A VIRTUAL ONE?

security, by offering secure and professional handling of alibis for you."

The Alibi Agency will invent for you a suitable alibi, which varies in price according to its complexity. Faking a doctor's appointment would cost about \$45, while creating a fictitious business could cost thousands. It even offers to make hotel bookings or gift purchases on your behalf so you and your infidelity can't be traced.

The founder of the Alibi Agency is now attempting to franchise his operations around the world. When we last checked, the Australian franchise was still available.

Meetin' & cheatin' made easier

Then there's the boys from skim.com
www.skim.com, a Zurich-based Web business dedicated to selling hip, urban clothing that brings together people online and off. Each article of clothing sold has a visible identifying number, which also doubles as a person's email address. A

person wearing a sweatshirt with, for example, 012345 on the front can be contacted at 012345@skim.com, making it possible to contact,



or "skim", someone who catches your interest.

The Swiss, apparently, have gone mad for it. And the idea has caught the attention of venture capitalists in the US who no doubt, are drooling over the possibilities. Imagine the implications of a city full of people parading their availability and the means to contact them anonymously.

Does this all mean we'll soon come to need moral guidance as we surf? Is there a difference between a real affair and a virtual one?

One thing's for sure. Skim.com and Alibi Agency have no chance of doing business in Italy. And Infidelity Busters will make a fortune there. ■

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ONSALE 16TH OF AUGUST



Oddities by Auntie Lulu

Thanks to Brendan, Matt, Erin, Ross and Jo for finding the sites below. This month we pay homage to two of history's most famous men — George Speight and Jesus Christ. Yes, I know...sometimes it's difficult to tell the difference.

We love you George www.georgespeight.net

I don't care what anyone says, I think George Speight looks marvellous in a skirt — especially with that cute little smirk he wears most days. Now, George has a home on the Net too, just like any true man of the world deserves. Though George, please use this advice from your Auntie Lulu: taking Fijian citizens hostage is one thing. Holding New Zealanders and Australians against their will is altogether a very different matter.



Mind your slanguage www.slanguae.com



Slanguage will teach you to speak like a New Yorker ("Doily Boyd" — the thing that catches the worm; and "Cawna Fish Treet" — corner of 5th Street); or like a true Londoner ("Apples and Pears" — stairs) Perhaps gorgeous Georgieboy could start an Indian section?

Fear not! www.phobialist.com

Find out how phobias are named and which sites can help you manage yours. Did you know of alektorophobia — a fear of chickens? Or bolshephobia — a fear of Bolsheviks? What about caligynephobia — fear of beautiful women? The man who sits opposite me on the train most mornings must have that. It explains why he won't engage me in conversation. My friend at the solarium also told me there's a virulent new phobia sweeping the South Pacific called Georgeaphobia — fear of being held hostage.

Famous last words zap.to/thatsallfolks

I never knew Pinocchio said: "borers, what are borers?" just before he died. Or that B1's last gasp to B2 was: "Look at that heard of starving monkeys heading our way". And apparently, Dino finally turned on Fred and Wilmer. The famous last words of your favourite cartoon characters are waiting for you here. Lest we forget them all. I wonder what George's last words will be...



A sacred site www.askjesus.org

I'll let you find your own way through this one groovers, since I never want to be accused of sacrilege. One thing I will say though: this site allows you to "Jesus-fy" any site on the Web. So take care and may your god go with you.



Thanks to NetGuide for lending me an email address last month. Now, I've got my very own. So mail me with your Oddities at auntlulu@loveable.com.

Best Oddity next month gets an Encyclopedia Britannica DVD. The winner of our Master Clips Web Art package for their August Oddity suggestion is...drum roll please...the marvellous Matt, for bringing yet more George into our lives.

TER...NASDAQ RIDES ROLLERCOASTER...NAS

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